

# THE LAWS OF MANU

A SUMMARY IN ENGLISH

With Introduction and Notes

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FOR INDIA

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## INTRODUCTION

A GREAT authority has declared that the Laws of Manu are the most interesting of all post-vedic writings, both as presenting a picture of the institutions, usages, manners and intellectual condition of an important part of the Hindu race at a remote period, and as revealing the exaggerated nature of the rules by which the Brāhmans sought to secure their own ascendancy and to perpetuate an organised caste system in subordination to themselves. The summary which is presented in the following pages will substantiate that statement, and enable the reader to observe in what ways the present-day Hindu has abandoned the teaching of Manu and in what ways he still adheres to it.

**Authorship.**—The book is attributed to the first of the seven great Manus, who were, according to Hindu legend, each responsible for one of the seven creations which have so far been accomplished. It was not unusual for Indian writers to give an importance and dignity to their compositions by claiming an exalted origin for their productions, and here we find that not only is the first Manu laid hold upon, but he is made to say that the 'Creator himself taught it to him, alone at the beginning.' As Manu himself was the secondary creator of the first creation it is difficult to imagine a more exalted source. As will be noted elsewhere, the book does not maintain throughout this lofty claim, and many passages will be easily recognised as acknowledging that the work had been composed in time and not in eternity, and even had predecessors of the same character and purpose, while authorities are content to give it a date somewhere about the beginning of the Christian era. After the manner of both later and earlier Sanskrit works, Manu begins with a description of creation, the creation in which he shared. It would be more correct to say that he gives three versions of the work of creation, which cannot be reconciled with each other. These descriptions would seem to be an attempt, which is manifest in other chapters also, at combining the theories held by the Sāṃkhya

and Vedānta schools of philosophy, but, as will be observed in the Mahābhārata, so here also, they belong to a time before these theories had, as Monier Williams remarks, diverged into distinct systems.

**The Brahman.**—It is not, however, the process of creation that concerns the student of the Laws of Manu. The book was written for another purpose, and we study it for another reason, namely, as we have said, because it presents a picture of men's manners and customs in bygone days. At the very threshold, however, we discover a limitation. We find that the book is written primarily for Brāhmans, and that when it discusses the duties of the other castes, it does so in a very subordinate way. For we are at once met with the claim that of the four castes into which the social order is divided, the Brāhman is the greatest. 'For the sake of the prosperity of the worlds, he (Brahmā) caused the Brāhman, the Kṣatriya, the Vaiśya, and the Śūdra to proceed from his mouth, his arms, his thighs and his feet' (1.31), and all through the book the claim is made with growing emphasis, if that were possible, that in virtue of his more lofty origin, the Brāhman is nothing less than a god among men. No doubt it is often urged that a Brāhman was created to study the sacred books, and that he must live up to his high calling, and that ignorance of the Veda is a Brāhman's greatest sin, a sin that degrades and defiles. Nevertheless, the Brāhman is what he is by right of birth, and all his rights are divine. He is a mighty divinity, whether learned or unlearned, and must under all circumstances be honoured. Even the gods regard him as a deity, and his teaching must never be held in question (11.85). Base occupations cannot stain his glory, just as fire is not contaminated by being used at the burning-ground (9.319). The greatest crime on earth is to kill a Brāhman (8.381). There is no expiation for such a sin (11.90). An angry Brāhman is able to destroy whole kingdoms by the power of his curses, and in ancient times, so it is recorded, Brāhmans by means of their austerities, and as a punishment to the gods, were able to create new worlds, and even new gods and new men (9.315). It is wrong to levy any tax on Brāhmans, and they must never be subjected to the indignity of corporal punishment.

Even to threaten to strike a Brāhman plunges a man into hell, while for every particle of dust that sucks up the blood of a Brāhman the man who caused that blood to flow must spend one thousand years in hell (11.207-8, also 4.165-68). Other persons may not avenge their private wrongs. They must appeal to the king. But the Brāhman is his own master and can take the law into his own hands, for his power is greater than that of an earthly king. Speech is the Brāhman's weapon, and by making use of the Atharva Veda, with its charms and imprecations, he is able to overcome and slay all those who rise up against him (11.31-33). Brāhmans, too, are absolutely necessary for kings. Only that king prospers who does nothing until he has consulted these holy men (7.82-85, 10.43), and famine is sure to befall that country where a learned Brāhman is allowed to suffer from hunger (7.134). It was the Brāhman's business to study the sacred texts and to offer sacrifices; and the community's business was to see to it that the Brāhman was duly fed. And so men were told that when they fed the Brāhmans they were in reality feeding the gods, and all might be sure that when they distributed wealth to the Brāhmans they would, at the hour of death, acquire a place in the upper world of happiness and bliss (11.6), while intending sacrificers were told that it was no use offering sacrifices unless they had plenty of money to make liberal gifts. Every time a Brāhman is born, there takes place a fresh incarnation of the sacred law. Whatever exists in the world is the property of the Brāhman. He is, indeed, entitled to it all, on account of the excellence of his origin. The Brāhman eats but his own food, wears but his own apparel, bestows but his own when he receives anything in alms. Other mortals subsist through the kindness of the Brāhman. He is the lord of all created things (1.98-101).

On the other hand, the Brāhman is warned that failure to study the Veda brings a speedy punishment on himself and his family. It is equally disastrous for him to follow forbidden occupations, to beget children on Śūdra women only, to trade in cows, horses and carriages, to engage in agriculture and to take service with a king (3.64). In connection with funeral feasts, the giver is told that to satisfy one learned Brāhman



with food and gifts is more beneficial than to invite a million men ignorant of the Veda; indeed, ignorant Brāhmanas are warned that for all the food they swallow at sacrifices to the gods and manes, they will have to swallow red-hot spikes and iron balls after death (3.131-33). While kings and others are exhorted to give gifts as a sure way to secure heavenly bliss, the Brāhman is told that the receiving of gifts is dangerous. 'Let not the Brāhman attach himself too much to that habit, for through his accepting many presents the divine light in him is soon extinguished (4.186). Without a full knowledge of the rules prescribed by the sacred law for the acceptance of presents, a wise man should not take anything, even though he may pine with hunger (187). Gold and food destroy his longevity, land and a cow his body, a horse his eyesight, clarified butter his energy, and sesamum grains his offspring' (189). The twenty-one hells are reserved for the Brāhman who accepts anything from an avaricious king who acts contrary to the institutes of the sacred law (4.87). And, as a help to tame his pride of birth, as well as to encourage him in the paths of true morality, these wise words are given: 'Let not a Brāhman, even though in pain, speak words cutting others to the quick; let him not injure others in thought or deed; let him not utter speeches which make others afraid of him, since that will prevent him from gaining heaven. A Brāhman should always fear homage as if it were poison, and constantly desire to suffer scorn as he would long for nectar. For he who is scorned may sleep with an easy mind, awake with an easy mind, and with an easy mind walk here among men, but the scorner utterly perishes' (2.161-63).

**The low caste.**—In sad contrast to the Brāhman's lofty state is that of the Śūdra. Though said to be the fourth of the four castes, it is declared that he cannot commit an offence causing loss of caste. He is not worthy to receive the sacraments. He has no right to fulfil the sacred law of the Aryans. He may not hear, learn, recite or teach the Veda, while the Brāhman who explains the law to a Śūdra or dictates to him a penance will sink together with him into the hell that has no bounds. One occupation only is open to the Śūdra, and it was prescribed for him by the Creator, and that is to serve meekly

## INTRODUCTION

the other three castes (1.91), while his name must be one expressive of contempt (2.31). It was unlawful for a Brāhman to accept anything from a Śūdra, and whether he was technically bond or free the Brāhman could force him to engage in servile work. It was a honour to a Śūdra to be presented with the rejected food and the old clothes of the twice-born, while the law forbade a Śūdra to accumulate wealth (10.51-55).

It was not a great crime to kill a Śūdra. No penance could expiate the guilt incurred by intentionally killing a Brāhman (11.90), but for killing a dog, an owl, a lizard, a crow and a Śūdra the penance was the same (11.132).

The punishment inflicted on Śūdras for want of respect to members of the twice-born castes reveals, best of all, the attitude of others towards them. 'A Śūdra who insults a twice-born man with gross invective, shall have his tongue cut out. If he mentions the names and castes of the twice-born with contumely, an iron nail ten fingers long shall be thrust red-hot into his mouth. If he arrogantly teaches Brāhmins their duty, the king shall cause hot oil to be poured into his mouth and ears (8.270-72). With whatever limb a man of a low caste does hurt to a man of the three highest castes, even that limb shall be cut off (279). A low-caste man who tries to place himself on the same seat with a man of a high caste shall be branded on the hip and banished, or the king shall cause his buttock to be gashed. If out of arrogance he spits on a superior, the king shall cause both his lips to be cut off; if he makes water on him, the penis; if he breaks wind against him, the anus. If he lays hold of the hair of a superior, let the king unhesitatingly cut off his hands; likewise if he takes him by the feet, beard, the neck, the scrotum' (8.281-83). As a contrast read the punishment awarded to men of other castes. 'He who defames his mother, his father, his wife, his brother, his son or his teacher . . . shall be compelled to pay one hundred panas. For mutual abuse Brāhmins and Kṣatriyas shall be fined, the Brāhman paying a lower fine than the Kṣatriya' (8.275-76).

**Manners and customs.**—While thus glorifying his own order and setting at naught that of the Śūdra, the Brāhman was

gracious enough to set beside himself the two other castes and to say regarding them that they were, like himself, twice-born men entitled to be invested with the sacred thread, the triple cord which members of the higher castes still assume. But a study of Manu makes it plain that, apart from the chapters dealing with kingship and the work of government, the author's thoughts are engrossed with the Brāhman and his duties and privileges. We are accordingly told with great detail how a Brāhman must spend his days as a student, as a householder, as a hermit, and, lastly, as a religious mendicant. These were the four Āśrams, or orders, through which, in theory at least, every Brāhman had to pass. During the first he had to live with a religious teacher, maintaining himself on alms, thoroughly acquire a knowledge of the three Vedas, and engage in the practice of religious rites. When his time was complete the student entered the life of the householder, fulfilling by his marriage what was regarded as a religious duty of the first importance, for it is only when a man has begotten a son that he can hope for salvation, either his own or that of his ancestors. It is a son that saves a man from hell (9.138) by the due performance of funeral rites, and Manu describes with great detail how the sacrifices to the manes, or spirits, of the dead must be performed.

**Marriage.**—It is in connection with marriage and the life of the householders, as described by Manu, that the greatest contrast between present-day and ancient India manifests itself. For the amazing doctrine is taught, that a Brāhman may have four wives, one from each of the four castes. No doubt, we are told in chapter ten (10.10), that the children born to wives of the lower castes are base-born, but other verses do not give support to that opinion. They clearly approve of the practice, and it was distinctly laid down that a father's property was to be divided between all his sons irrespective of their mothers' origin. 'For the first marriage of twice-born men, wives of equal caste are recommended, but for those who through desire proceed to marry again, the following females, chosen according to the direct order of the castes are most approved. It is declared that a Śūdra woman alone can be the wife of a Śūdra, she and one of his own caste the wives of a Vaiśya,



those two and one of his own caste the wives of a Kṣatriya, those three and one of his own caste the wives of a Brāhman' (3.12-13). 'He who possesses faith may receive pure learning even from a man of lower caste, the highest law even from the lowest, and an excellent wife even from a base family. Even from poison nectar may be taken, even from a child good advice, even from a foe a lesson in good conduct, and even from an impure substance gold. Excellent wives, learning the knowledge of the law, the rules of purity, good advice and various arts may be acquired from anybody' (2.238-40). As to inheritance this is what we read: 'Let the son of the Brāhman wife take three shares of the remainder of the estate, the son of the Kṣatriya two shares, the son of the Vaiśya a share and a half, and the son of the Śūdra may take one share. Or let him who knows the law make ten shares of the whole estate and justly distribute them according to the following rule: The Brāhman's son shall take four shares, the son of the Kṣatriya wife three, the son of the Vaiśya shall have two parts, the son of the Śūdra may take one' (9.151-53). The next verse, however, declares that in the event of a Brāhman having no sons by wives of the twice-born castes, the son of a Śūdra wife must take not more than a tenth part of his father's estate. It is Manu's approval of this practice, so abhorrent to men of later days, that caused later lawgivers to declare that the laws of different ages are different, and so it is said that this law-book was composed for men living in the Kṛta or first age of the world, and that the marriage of twice-born men with women of other castes is forbidden in the present age. The practice of Niyoga, also, which is both approved and condemned by Manu, is one to which later law-books refused to give their approval. It was not till the nineteenth century that Dayānanda Sarasvatī, the founder of the Ārya Samāj, sought not only to revive it but to give it an amplitude which it never possessed before. It is discussed in a note in connection with chapter five. It is enough to say here that Niyoga sanctioned the raising up of issue on one's wife by a brother or other relative, and claimed that the son thus born was to be reckoned as legitimate and able to perform the duties of a true son.

**The position of women.**—Manu has much to say with regard to the character and position of women. It is a melancholy

picture—'Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males of their families, and if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments they must be kept under control. Her father protects her in childhood, her husband protects her in youth, and her sons protect her in old age; a woman is never fit for independence (9.2-3). Women do not care for beauty, nor is their attention fixed on age; thinking it is enough that he is a man, they give themselves to the handsome and the ugly. Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal to their husbands, however carefully they may be guarded in this world. Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid on them at the creation, to be such, every man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them. When creating them, Manu allotted to women a love of their bed, of their seat and of ornaments, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct. For women no sacramental rite is performed with sacred texts; thus the law is settled. Women who are destitute of strength and of the knowledge of the Vedic texts, are as impure as falsehood itself' (9.14-18).

The wife, despite the contempt thus poured upon her, is enjoined to seek the source of every happiness in her lord. He may be possessed of no good qualities, he may be lacking in every virtue, he may associate with other women, the wife must constantly worship her husband as a god. She must on no occasion do anything that would displease him, be he alive or dead. By implicit obedience, and that alone, can she hope to secure heaven, and dwell after death in the enjoyment of his society. She can perform no sacrifice, she can observe no fast, she can take upon herself no vow, apart from her husband (5.154-56). On the other hand, it is recognised that 'women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare. Where women are honoured there the gods are pleased, but where they are not honoured no sacred rite yields rewards. Where the female relatives live in grief the family soon wholly perishes, but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers. The houses on which female relations, not being duly honoured, pronounce a curse, perish completely

as if destroyed by magic. Hence men who seek their own welfare should always honour women, on holidays and festivals, with gifts of ornaments, clothes and dainty food' (3.55-59). Between wives who are destined to bear children, who secure many blessings, who are worthy of worship and irradiate their dwellings, and between the goddesses of fortune, who reside in the houses of men, there is no difference whatever' (9.26). Here a much higher note is struck, but even here it will be observed that the honour they are to receive is based on the fact that women are the means of securing offspring—an absolute necessity for the husbands' eternal welfare. There are, however, two verses in a later portion of the ninth chapter which must not be ignored. They breathe that lofty morality which, in place after place, breaks through the teaching of Manu and illumines the darkness. 'Let mutual fidelity continue until death; this may be considered as the summary of the highest law for husband and wife. Let man and woman, united in marriage, constantly exert themselves that they may not be disunited and may not violate their mutual fidelity' (9.101-2<sup>1</sup>).

**Religious practices.**—The reader of Manu will note with some surprise that very little is said about the worship of the gods, and that in particular very few references are made to what is so prominent a feature in the Hinduism of the present day, the use of temples and images. There are, of course,

<sup>1</sup> A writer in the *Social Reform Advocate*, Madras, March 9, 1918, makes the following quotation from the Padma Purāṇa, which will be recognised as a lengthened paraphrase of Manu:—'Be her husband deformed, aged, infirm, offensive in his manners; let him also be choleric, debauched, immoral, a drunkard, a gambler; let him frequent places of ill-repute, live in open sin with another woman, have no affection whatever for his home; let him rave like a lunatic; let him live without honour; let him be blind, deaf, dumb, or crippled—in a word, let his defects be what they may; let his wickedness be what it may—a wife should always look upon him as her god. She should lavish on him all her attention and care, paying no heed whatever to his character and giving him no cause whatsoever for displeasure. If her husband flies into a passion, threatens her, abuses her grossly, even beats her unjustly, she shall answer him meekly, shall lay hold of his hands, kiss them and beg his pardon, instead of uttering loud cries and running away from the house. . . . Let all her actions give public proof that she looks upon her husband as a god.'



frequent references to the oblations that are daily offered to a number of Vedic deities, while the worship of the manes, or spirits of the dead, is dealt with in great detail. In 2.176 the student is told that, in addition to libations of water to gods, sages and manes, he must worship the images of the gods; but, on the other hand, in 3.152 temple-priests are classed with physicians and sellers of meat, as persons who ought to be shunned, and, with a view to preventing their presence at funeral feasts, it is declared that food given to a temple-priest on such an occasion carries no merit whatever (3.180). There are only five other references in the whole of Manu to temples and idols. It is said that a man must not step on the shadow cast by the image of a god (4.130); that he who destroys images shall be made to repair the damage and pay a fine (9.285); that when anyone passes an idol, a Brāhman or clarified butter, he should turn his right hand towards them (4.39); that a judge shall ask witnesses to give true evidence in the presence of the images of the gods and of Brāhmans (8.87); and that those who rob a royal storehouse, an armoury, or a temple, should be punished with death (9.280). Monier Williams thinks that the gods, being the deified forces of nature, were not represented by idols in the Vedic period, and questions if idolatry was at all commonly practised at the time of the compilation of the Code. It should be remembered, however, that even at the present day, when the land is full of temples and idols, the Brāhman who acts as temple-priest is not held in high estimation, and that, while giving his consent to the practice of polytheism, the educated Brāhman often maintains for himself what he believes to be a 'better way,' in which polytheism is absorbed in a higher pantheism. That this also was the doctrine of the compilers of Manu is proved by many passages throughout the book, and particularly in the last chapter. 'Let every Brāhman, concentrating his mind, fully recognise in the Self all things, both the real and the unreal, for he who recognises the universe in the Self does not give his heart to unrighteousness. The Self alone is the multitude of the gods, the universe rests on the Self' (12.118-19). The author then goes on to identify Viṣṇu with a man's power of movement, Hara with his strength, the moon with his internal organ, Agni with his

speech, Mitra with excretions, Prajāpati with his organ of generation, and then he adds that the Supreme Male (*Puruṣa*) is the sovereign ruler of them all . . . 'perceptible by the intellect only when in a state of sleeplike abstraction. Some call him Agni, others Manu the lord of creatures, others Indra, others the vital air, and again others eternal Brahmā. He prevades all created beings . . . and constantly makes them, by means of birth, growth and decay, revolve like the wheels of a chariot. He who thus recognises the Self through the Self in all created things becomes equal-minded towards all and enters the highest state, Brahmā' (12.122-25).

**The five sacrifices.**—That was the conclusion of the whole matter, and helps to explain the absence of much reference to temple service and idol worship; but there was no neglect of worship celebrated within the home, and the gods were fully and clearly recognised and honoured in other ways. The householder, at least the Brāhman householder—and let it be remembered the Code was written largely for his benefit—was his own family priest, and with the help of his own domestic fire made his daily oblations to gods and sages, spirits (good and evil) and men. It is very clearly laid down that the pious householder must, every day of his life, offer what are called the five great sacrifices. They are as follows: (1) by reciting the Vedas a man pays homage to their authors, the sages; (2) by casting butter into the domestic fire (*homa*) he worships the gods; (3) by pouring out water and offering food he worships the spirits of the departed; (4) by the offering of rice grains (*balī*) he appeases all kinds of spirits; (5) by giving hospitality he offers his homage to men. The gods who receive worship include Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Agni, Dhanvantari, Prajāpati and Viśvadevāh (all the gods), while in the *balī* offering the officiating person throws his offerings in all directions from east to west, and during a part of the ceremony must do so from the upper storey of his house. Much stress is laid on the exactness of the ritual, because everything will be of no avail if the prescribed form is not scrupulously adhered to. The Asuras, for example, snatch away the food that is not held in both hands (3.225), while the sacrificer must be very careful lest he

let a tear drop on the sacrifice or touch it with his foot (3.229). A tear sends the offering to the evil spirits, and contact with the foot to the demons. At Śrāddhas, a lame man and a man with one eye must be carefully excluded, while a guest, when receiving hospitality, must never look towards the south as he eats. He must also keep his head covered and his feet uncovered. Otherwise the demons will profit by all that he eats. While, in the warnings given against the use of intoxicants by Brāhmans, nothing is more urgent than that a Brāhman in a state of intoxication might tread on something unclean, or, worse still, give a wrong pronunciation to a verse from the Vedas (11.97).

Of the five daily sacrifices the first is the most important and yields untold blessings. An offering consisting of muttered prayers is ten times more efficacious than a sacrifice performed according to the rites of the Veda; a prayer which is inaudible to others surpasses it a hundred times, and the mental recitation of sacred texts a thousand times (2.85). The daily muttering of the Veda is a man's highest duty, all other observances are secondary (4.147) because the daily study of the sacred text destroys all guilt (11.246). By a process of selection, however, one verse is found to be particularly holy, namely, the Gāyatrī with the sacred syllable OM, and the three words *Bhūh*, *Bhuvah* and *Svar*, called the Vyāhrtis.<sup>1</sup> If a learned Brāhman repeats these morning and evening, he need do no more. He has acquired all the merit that a recitation of the three Vedas would confer (2.78), and by repeating them three thousand times outside the village he will be freed from the guilt of any crime, however heinous. These sacred words are the portal of the Veda and the gate that leads to union with Brahmā (2.81): All rites ordained in the Veda, burnt oblations and other sacrifices, pass away, but the syllable OM is imperishable, and nothing surpasses the Gāyatrī verse. The letters OM are at once Brahma, the Supreme Spirit and Prajāpati the creator (2.84).

**The eating of flesh.**—There is no matter in which Manu differs from present teaching and practice more than in the sanction which he gives to the use of flesh. It was this fact

<sup>1</sup> See Notes.



among others that led later lawgivers to declare that Manu's Code was intended for the first age of the world only. 'Marriage with the widow of a deceased brother, the slaughter of cattle in entertaining guests, flesh meat at funeral obsequies . . . are forbidden in the fourth age.'<sup>1</sup> In view of the importance of the subject it may be well to quote what Manu himself has to say. 'Beasts and birds recommended for consumption may be slain by Brāhmans for sacrifices and in order to feed those whom they are bound to maintain: for Agastya did this of old. In ancient times the sacrificial cakes were made of the flesh of eatable beasts and birds' (5.22-23). One may eat meat when it has been sprinkled with water and mantras are recited, when Brāhmans desire one's doing it, when one is engaged in the performance of a rite according to the law, and when one's life is in danger (5.27). The eater who daily even devours those destined to be his food commits no sin, for the Creator created both the eaters and those who are to be eaten for those special purposes (5.30). He who eats meat when he honours the gods and the manes commits no sin (5.32). A man who, being duly engaged to officiate or to dine at a sacred rite, refuses to eat meat becomes after death an animal during twenty-one existences (5.35). The Self-existent himself created animals for the sake of sacrifices; sacrifices have been instituted for the good of the whole world; hence the slaughtering of beasts for sacrifices is not slaughtering in the ordinary sense of the word (5.39). Herbs, trees, cattle, birds and other animals that have been destroyed for sacrifices receive at rebirth higher existences (5.40). On offering the honey mixture to a guest at a sacrifice and at the rites in honour of the manes, but on these occasions only, may an animal be slain (5.41). A Brāhman must never eat the flesh of animals unhallowed by mantras, but obedient to the primeval law he may eat it consecrated with Vedic texts (5.36). If he has a strong desire for meat, he may make an animal of clarified butter or one of flour and eat that, but let him never seek to destroy an animal without a lawful reason (5.37). Know that the injury to moving creatures and to those destitute of motion, which the Veda has prescribed for certain occasions, is no

<sup>1</sup> Nārada's Law-book, quoted by Sir William Jones. See Monier Williams' *Indian Wisdom*, p. 301.

injury at all (5.44). A twice-born man, who knowing the true meaning of the Veda slays an animal for these purposes, causes both himself and the animal to enter a most blessed state (5.42). In view of the fact that the entertainment of guests was a religious duty that called for daily performance, and the sacrifices to the manes in Śhrāddhas<sup>1</sup> were not at all infrequent, it would seem as if Brāhmans had many opportunities of eating flesh in accordance with the law. Indeed, it was a kindness to sacrifice animals and to eat their flesh, if by so doing the animals' future happiness and elevation in the scale of existence were secured.<sup>2</sup>

In any case, it will be noted that the above-quoted verses sanction, and indeed command, the use of meat in connection with religious ceremonies. There are, however, other verses which also occur in this same chapter. They strike a different note, and may represent the advent of those views which, probably first inspired by Buddhism, forbade all use of flesh as evil. 'He who during a hundred years annually offers a horse-sacrifice, and he who entirely abstains from meat, obtain the same reward for their meritorious conduct, . . . by eating food fit for ascetics in the forest one does not gain so great a reward as by entirely avoiding the use of flesh (5.53-54). Meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures, and injury to sentient beings is detrimental to the attainment of heavenly bliss; let him, therefore, shun the use of meat. Having well considered the disgusting origin of flesh, and the cruelty of fettering and slaying corporal beings, let him entirely abstain from eating flesh' (5.48-49).

**Moral teaching.**—The last two chapters of Manu deal almost entirely with penance and transmigration. Penance is what a man must render through his body or through his purse for the sins of which he has been guilty. Transmigration as dealt with in the code is not a theory to explain the problem of evil. It is rather a warning of the results that follow from evil doing.<sup>3</sup> It tells also of the bliss that is in store for those

<sup>1</sup> Chapter III, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> See Note B, Chārvāka, p. 38, and his proposal that a sacrificer should offer his own father if beasts slain in sacrifice went to heaven!

<sup>3</sup> But note the statement (1.28-29) that man's lot has been fixed from the beginning, which, as a doctrine of predestination, scarcely agrees with the other opinions that man and beast reap what they sow.



who have acted righteously. 'Let the ascetic reflect on the transmigrations of men caused by their sinful deeds, on their falling into hell and on the torments in the land of Yama, on the separation from their dear ones, on their union with hated men, on their being overpowered by age, and being tormented by diseases, on the departure of the individual soul from this body and its new birth in another womb, and on its wanderings through ten thousand millions of existences' (6.61-63). Many of the sins which entail these awful consequences are purely sins of ritual. There are, on the other hand, sins of the gravest character which can be very easily atoned for. The Brāhman who begs from a Śūdra will after death be born as a Cāṇḍāla (11.24). The Brāhman who does not use all that he has begged for a sacrifice will have to live for one hundred years in the form of a crow (11.25). If a girl or a fool or a man in great suffering take part in the Agnihotra sacrifice, they will sink into hell (11.36). Allowing a younger brother to marry first is reckoned as great a sin as adultery or the killing of cows (11.60-61). So, too, is the cutting down of green trees for firewood (11.65). Eating the flesh of human beings carries the same punishment as eating the flesh of crows and donkeys (11.157), while the sin of criminal intercourse with a man is atoned for by bathing in one's clothes (11.175). The virtue of fasting and austerities is also greatly emphasised without reference to the exercise of any moral purpose. We are told that gods and men have acquired all the blessedness they possess by the practice of austerities. But embedded in this teaching, which deals with the outside of the cup only and makes no reference to repentance as the true cleanser of the soul, we all at once come upon a noble passage. It is preceded by a verse which tells us that sins are expiated by the recitation of sacred texts and the performance of burnt oblations (11.227). It is followed by another, which states that insects, snakes, moths, bees and birds reach heaven by the power of austerities (11.241). The passage is as follows: 'In proportion as a man, who has done wrong, himself confesses it, even so far is he freed from guilt, as a snake from its slough. In proportion as his heart loathes his evil deeds, even so far is his body freed from that guilt. He who has committed a sin and has repented is freed from

that sin, but he is purified only by the resolution of ceasing to sin, and thinking, "I will do so no more" (11.229-31).

In succeeding verses the compilers return to their old trust in formalism, and, even more than that, the chapter ends with the penances that are required to atone for sins that have never become public. Evidently, if your crime is not discovered, it is easy to acquire remission of guilt. The murderer of a learned Brāhman need do no more than suppress his breath sixteen times and repeat daily for one month the mystic syllable OM and the three Vyāhrtis, *Bhūr*, *Bhuvah* and *Svar*. Elsewhere we read that this is one of the four mortal sins. And so, too, with the three others, drinking surā, stealing gold from a Brāhman, and violating a guru's bed, there are verses in the Veda whose single repetition can cleanse the sinner of these *most* heinous crimes. And as a climax to all this, we are told that a Brāhman who retains in his memory the Rg Veda is not stained by guilt, though he may have destroyed the three worlds, though he may have eaten the food of anybody (11.262).

These great diversities of moral and spiritual outlook can only be explained by saying that the compilers drew their material from very different sources; but the mystery remains. How could any compilers be content to leave such contradictory teachings standing side by side, aspirations that carried men right up to the heart of God, superstitions that swept them into the abyss of despair and darkness?

## CHAPTER I

### THE CREATION

THE great sages, on one occasion, went to Manu, and after worshipping that divine being, asked him to give them a clear account of the sacred laws that had been appointed for the four castes and also for the intermediate castes. In making their request they said that he alone knew the true meaning of these laws, and that none but he was endowed with a knowledge of the soul, as it had been taught by the Self-existent (*Svayambhū*).

Being thus addressed, Manu, the possessor of boundless power and knowledge, replied by giving first of all an account

**First story of  
creation**

of how the universe came into being. This universe existed in the shape of darkness, plunged as it were in sleep, not to be grasped by human knowledge or perception; bearing no marks by which it could be distinguished. To it in this condition there came the Self-existent and dispelled the darkness. He who cannot be perceived made the imperceptible perceptible, and with the desire to create beings of many kinds he brought forth the waters. Into these waters he cast his seed. The seed changed into a golden egg, shining like the sun. In this egg the Self-existent was born as Brahmā the creator, the great forefather of all. To the waters were given the name of Nārā, because they were the offspring of Nara (which means the original male); and because they were his first dwelling-place (*ayana*) Brahmā is called Nārāyana.<sup>1</sup> When he had dwelt in the egg for a year, that male (*puruṣa*) known to the world as Brahmā divided the egg into two, and from the two halves he created the heaven and the earth, as well as the space between and the dwelling-place of the waters. He then brought forth from himself mind (*manas*), which is both real and unreal; egoism (*aḥamkāra*), which is self-consciousness;

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<sup>1</sup> The name Nārāyana is, in later times, appropriated by the god Vishnu.

the great one, the soul (*mahat*); all products affected by the three qualities; and the five organs of perception.<sup>1</sup>

To all created beings the Creator assigned their several names, as well as the conditions under which they should live and the acts they should perform, even as it has been declared in the Vedas. He created the gods also and the Sādhya, who are the rites and prayers of the Vedas personified. He created the sacrifice, which is ordained from the beginning. From fire, wind and sun he milked out the three Vedas, the Ṛg, the Yajur and the Sāma. Time also and its divisions, the planets and the stars, rivers and seas, mountains and plains, desire and anger, restraint and speech, were created by him at his will. And he distinguished between merit and demerit, that men might know that there is a difference between actions, and he made creatures subject to pleasure and pain. Whatever course of action the Creator appointed to each class of being in the beginning, to that course of action each class of being has ever since adhered in every succeeding creation: be it gentle or fierce, false or true, good or evil, harmless or injurious.

For the good of the world, he caused the Brāhman to proceed from his mouth, the Kṣatriya from his arms or breast, the Vaiśya from his thighs, and the Śūdra from his feet,<sup>2</sup> the four castes among men.

Having gone so far, Manu then proceeds to give a new version of creation. He now says (1.33 *et seq.*) that Brahmā divided his own body into two: one half male (puruṣa), the other half female. With the female portion he produced Virāj.<sup>3</sup> Manu then adds, 'You must understand that I, Manu, am the Creator of this existing universe, and that I was produced by that male (puruṣa) Virāj. Once produced, Manu began to engage in

<sup>1</sup> The 'products' probably refer to the *tan-mātras*, or subtle elementary principles, out of which the grosser elements are produced. The three qualities refer to *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, goodness, passion, darkness. As to these and following verses, the commentators differ greatly, some reading them in a Sāṅkhya, others in a Vedānta sense.

<sup>2</sup> See *Rg Veda*, X, 90. A late hymn, it contains the earliest reference to the four castes.

<sup>3</sup> Splendour or shining.



great austerities, and thereby 'brought into being the ten Prajāpatis, or lords of creatures. Their names are as follows: Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Pracetas, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu and Nārada. These ten Prajāpatis, in their turn, created seven other Manus and also gods and sages of boundless might, demons and kindly spirits (Rakṣasas and Yakṣas), Gandharvas and Apsarasas (the musicians and nymphs of heaven), the Asuras (enemies of the gods), snakes, large and small (Nāgas and Sarpas), Suparṇas (birds with lovely wings), and the various classes of the Pitr̥s (Manes), the lightning and the thunderbolt, clouds and rain-bows, meteors and comets, monkeys, Kinnaras (men with the heads of horses), fishes, birds, cattle, deer, MEN, and flesh-eating beasts, worms, beetles, lice, bugs and flies, stinging and biting insects, and every kind of immovable thing.

Thus it was that *this* whole creation, both that which moves and that does not move, was brought into existence by the ten Prajāpatis, by means of austerities, and 'at my command,' says Manu.<sup>1</sup> To each of these separate creatures was appointed its own separate action, and Manu declares that he will explain what action is ordained for each and the nature of its birth. He then describes the classes of animals, born from the womb, from eggs, from moisture, from seeds and slips. He adds that even plants are surrounded by darkness (12.42), as a result of what they did in previous existences, and are possessed of consciousness, able to experience both pleasure and pain. The process of transmigration goes on without ceasing and affects everything possessed of life, from Brahmā the creator down to plants. It is an awful, never-resting, endless chain of birth and death. When the Incomprehensible One had thus created the universe and Manu, he was re-absorbed in the Supreme Spirit, or, as Bühler puts it, he disappeared in himself, which is explained by the commentators to mean that he divested himself of the body which he had assumed at his own will. The explanation then follows

<sup>1</sup> As Muir points out (O.S.T., Vol. I, p. 36): 'Manu uses the term *puruṣa* (male or primeval male) for three beings: (a) Brahmā, (b) the male formed by Brahmā from half of his own body, and (c) Virāj, the offspring of the female half of Brahmā's body.'

that the divine being repeatedly suppresses one period by means of another, for when he is awake this world stirs ; when he is asleep the whole scheme of things fades away ; the period of creation is followed by the period of destruction. In this way the undying one, waking and sleeping alternately, creates and destroys ; a process which goes on for ever.

Having given an account of Creation, Manu told the listening sages that 'this Code of laws' (*i.e.* the Laws of Manu)

**Bhrgu  
appointed  
to speak**

had been taught to him in the beginning by the divine being, and that he, Manu, had made them known to the ten Prajāpatīs. He adds that Bhrgu, one of the Prajāpatīs, who was present in their midst, would now proceed to recite in detail these laws. Bhrgu introduced himself by stating that, in addition to Manu, at whose command he was addressing them, there were six other Manus, all belonging to the race of the great Manu whom he designates as Manu Svāyambhuva, because of his origin from Svayambhū, the Self-existent. It will be remembered that in an earlier verse the great Manu said that the ten Prajāpatīs created seven other Manus. Here they are spoken of as six others, and as belonging to the race of 'this Manu.' Their names are given as Svārociṣa, Auttami, Tāmasa, Raivata, Cākṣuṣa, and Vaivasvata. At their head, yet apart from them, stands Manu Svāyambhuva, the author of the laws. These seven Manus have each produced and protected this whole creation, both that which moves and that which does not move, each Manu in his own period (*antara*).<sup>1</sup>

Bhrgu next discusses periods of time. Eighteen twinklings of the eye are equal to one Kāṣṭhā, thirty Kāṣṭhās are

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the belief that each Manu has ruled over a period of time called a Manvantara (*Manu-antara*). These separate periods of time each represent separate creations, and each Manu has been responsible for the creation of separate and succeeding universes. The last and seventh Manu, called Manu Vaivasvata, is the creator of the present existing universe. As Dr. Muir remarks (*O.S.T.*, Vol. I, p. 39), if this is the case, the question arises why did Manu describe in detail his own creation, which was the first, and with which the present race of mortals can have little to do? On the other hand, we should note that Manu speaks of his own creation as 'this existing universe.' Manifestly there is some contradiction here.

equal to one Kalā, thirty Kalās are equal to one Muhūrta, thirty Muhūrtas are equal to one day and night, a year of mortals is equal to a day and night of the gods. There are four ages : (a) the Kṛta Age, 4,000 years in length, with two twilights, each 400 years long ; (b) the Tretā Age, 3,000 years in length, with two twilights each 300 years long ; (c) the Dvāpara Age, 2,000 years in length, with two twilights each 200 years long ; and (d) the Kali Age, 1,000 years in length, with two twilights each 100 years long. These four ages consist of 12,000 years, and taken together are called 'one age of the gods.' One thousand of these ages of the gods make a day of Brahmā. A day of Brahmā is thus 12,000,000 years in length.<sup>1</sup> When his night follows it is of the same length.

Bhṛgu, not content with the statements about Creation made by Manu, proceeds to give the sages a third description, which varies from both the earlier ones. He says that when the night of Brahmā is over, god awakes from sleep and once more begins a fresh creation. First of all he creates mind (*manas*). Mind influenced by the desire of Brahmā to create, proceeds to create and ether is produced. From ether comes wind ; from wind, light which dispels the darkness ; from light, water ; from water, earth ; in this way is the universe formed. When we multiply the 12,000 years, which compose the four ages, by 71, we get the period of a Manu, or Manvantara. Each of these periods is said to mark the creation and destruction of a world<sup>2</sup> and are so numerous that they are beyond reckoning. The Creator, in sport, renews and destroys again and again.

When he comes to discuss the four ages, Bhṛgu tells us that in the first age, Kṛta-yuga, Dharma, the Sacred law, has

<sup>1</sup> The Sanskrit commentators on Manu and later books all declare that the 12,000 years composing the four human ages are divine years, each day of the gods being equal to a year of men. We have, according to this interpretation to multiply 12,000 years by 360 and thus get the total for the four ages as 4,320,000 years. In the same way, a day of Brahmā will be not 12,000,000 years but 4,320,000,000 years. The verse in Manu itself does not say that the 12,000 years are divine years, though it may be inferred from the context.

<sup>2</sup> This does not agree with the earlier statement that creation takes place at the end of a night of Brahmā.

four feet, and men make no 'profit from unrighteousness. In each succeeding age she is deprived of a foot, owing to the increasing prevalence of theft, falsehood and

**The four ages** fraud. The merit men acquire is correspondingly reduced. In the first age men live for 400 years, free from disease and obtain all that they desire. In succeeding ages life is reduced by one-fourth, so that in the fourth age, the Kali-yuga, its limit is 100 years. In these four ages mankind has different duties. The greatest virtue in the Kṛta age is the practice of austerities; in the Tretā, the acquirement of knowledge; in the Dvāpara, the performance of sacrifices; in the Kali, the making of gifts alone has power.

Different duties are also assigned to the four castes. The Brāhman, who sprang from the mouth of Brahmā, should teach and study the Vedas, give and receive alms,

**The four castes** offer sacrifice for the benefit of himself and others.<sup>1</sup> The duty of the Kṣatriya, who came from the breast of Brahmā, is to protect the people, offer gifts and sacrifices, study the Vedas and abstain from sensuality. The business of the Vaiśya is to care for cattle, plough the land, buy and sell, lend money and offer sacrifice. For the Śūdra there is one duty only, that is to serve with meekness the other three castes. The Brāhman is the lord of all. He sprang from the mouth of Brahmā. No created being can excel a Brāhman. By means of a Brāhman's mouth the gods consume the sacrificial food; by means of a Brāhman's mouth the spirits of the dead consume the offerings made to them. Of all created things man is the chief, while the Brāhman is the chief of men. When a Brāhman is born the sacred law has become incarnate. All that the world contains is the property of the Brāhman. A Brāhman is so great in excellence that he is entitled to everything. When you give him food, he but eats his own. When you give him clothes, he is putting on what is his own. When he receives a gift, he is really bestowing it upon himself. Were it not for the kindness of the Brāhman, other ordinary mortals would not exist at all. Manu composed these Laws so that the Brāhman might be able to set forth his own duties and those of the other castes, and it is the duty of a Brāhman to

<sup>1</sup> These are the Brāhman's six acts.



study this book and expound it to his disciples. No member of another caste is allowed to teach this book to others. A Brāhman who lives according to the teaching of this book is free from sin in thought, word and deed ; and his presence renders holy not only the persons in whose company he happens to be present, but their ancestors and descendants for seven generations, up and down as well. Such a Brāhman deserves to possess the whole earth. The study of this book increases a man's understanding, it secures happiness and fame and length of days. It secures eternal bliss.

A brief summary states what will be the teaching of the remaining chapters. Bhṛgu points out that the rule of conduct is of supreme importance ; that the man who errs with regard to that rule will not reap the rewards set forth in the Vedas. Good conduct is the root of all asceticism. Commentators explain that the rule of good conduct means the usages set forth in the Vedas and other books, such as anointing oneself with butter and sipping water at the appointed time.

## NOTE A

### The four ages

A summary of Manu Svâyambhuva's statements about Yugas and Manvantaras :

1. The four ages of mortals are :

Kṛta Yuga, with its mornings and evenings,	4,800	years.
Tretā Yuga	3,600	„
Dvāpara Yuga	2,400	„
Kali Yuga	1,200	„
		12,000 years.

A year of the gods is equal to 360 years of men. As these 12,000 years are held to be divine years by Manu's commentators, the length of the four ages is therefore as follows :—

Kṛta Yuga	.. ..	$4,800 \times 360 = 1,728,000$	years.
Tretā Yuga	.. ..	$3,600 \times 360 = 1,296,000$	„
Dvāpara Yuga	.. ..	$2,400 \times 360 = 864,000$	„
Kali Yuga	.. ..	$1,200 \times 360 = 432,000$	„
			4,320,000 years.

This total of four mortal ages = one age of the gods.

1,000 ages of the gods = one day of Brahmā.

Therefore one day of Brahmā = 4,320,000,000 years.

and one night of Brahmā = 4,320,000,000 „

At the end of each night of Brahmā the god awakes, and a period of creation begins. At the close of a day of Brahmā the god 'disappears in himself, repeatedly suppressing one period by means of another,' i.e. the period of creation is followed by the period of destruction.

2. It is also declared that the period of a Manu equals four human ages multiplied by 71, and that each period of a Manu or Manvantara marks the creation and destruction of a world.

N.B.—We are said to be living in the Kali Yuga, or fourth age of the universe created by Vaivasvata the seventh and last Manu. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa, however, declares that there will be seven other Manus, and that only one-half of the day of Brahmā has expired.

## CHAPTER II

### THE STUDENT,<sup>1</sup>

#### OR

### THE FIRST STAGE IN A BRĀHMAN'S LIFE

It is the duty of a Brāhman to study the sacred law. Men learned in the Vedas always follow it, and those who accept its teaching are always free from hatred and inordinate affection. It is not praiseworthy to act always and solely from the desire of obtaining rewards. On the other hand, it is not possible to find anywhere a man who is not actuated by this desire. And we know that men study the Veda and perform acts prescribed in the Veda in the hope of obtaining rewards. Men believe that *acts* produce rewards. Sacrifices are offered and laws are obeyed with that end in view. And, without a doubt, he who carries out the duties set forth in this book and does so in the right way, will not only get his desires fulfilled in this life, but will achieve endless bliss hereafter. The primary source of the sacred law is the Veda. Next in importance comes Tradition or Smṛti. Then the virtuous conduct (*śīla*) of those who know the Veda and also the customs (*ācāra*) of holy men. Fourthly, when no other authorities exist to guide him, or in matters where an option is allowed, a man may do as best pleases himself (*Ātma-tuṣṭi*): Revelation is the Veda, and Tradition is the institutes of the sacred law. No one must at any time express any doubt about their teaching in regard to any matter. Should any member of the first three castes, that is any twice-born man, treat with contempt these two sources of the sacred law, he should be cast out of the society of all persons with any self-respect. Such an one has been listening to the arguments of those who reason (*i.e.* say the commentators, the followers of Buddha and Cārvāka<sup>2</sup>). He is an atheist and a scorner of

<sup>1</sup> A Brāhman's life was divided into four stages: (1) Brahmachāri, that of a student; (2) Gṛhastha, householder; (3) Vānaprastha, dweller in the woods; (4) Sannyāsi, religious mendicant.

<sup>2</sup> See Note B. Cārvāka.

the Veda. When two verses of Revelation give contradictory teaching they are both to be held as correct. For instance, it is said that the Agnihotra sacrifice is to be performed before the sun has risen. Again, it is said that it should be performed after the sun has risen. Thirdly, it is said that it should be performed when neither sun nor stars can be seen. The true interpretation of these passages is that you can perform the sacrifice at any of these times. The study of the sacred law is not for those who seek either wealth or pleasure. It is confined also to men of the first three castes, who have conformed to the various rites laid down for them.

The land that lies between two holy rivers, Sarasvatī and Dhr̥ṣadvatī,<sup>1</sup> is called Brahmāvarta. The plain of the Kurus, the country of the Matsyas, Pañcālas and Sūrasenas,<sup>2</sup> these rank next in honour after Brahmāvarta as the land of the sages. Men of all countries can learn what they ought to do from Brāhmans born there. The land that lies between the Himālayas on the north, the Vindhya hills in the south, Prayāga (Allahabad) in the east, and Vinaśana in the west, is called Madhyadeśa (the middle country). The name of Āryāvarta (land of the Aryans) is given to the whole country which stretches from sea to sea north of the Vindhya hills and south of the Himālaya mountains. A twice-born man should live in one of these districts. Behind them lies the country of the Mlecchas, or barbarians.

Bhṛgu now proceeds to lay down the duties of the different castes (*varna*, or colour), but most of what he says applies to Brāhmans. He tells of ceremonies before and after birth, of sacred formulas to be recited, of vows that should be performed. When the navel-string is cut, the child should be fed with gold, honey and butter. Its name should be given on the tenth or twelfth day and under a lucky star. A Brāhman's name should denote something auspicious, a Kṣatriya's should have to do with power, a Vaiśya's with wealth, a name indicative of contempt

<sup>1</sup> Rivers now lost in the sands of the desert of south-eastern Punjab and north-western Rajputana.

<sup>2</sup> The Matsyas were in northern Rajputana. The Sūrasenas occupied the country round Muttra; the Kurus and Pañcālas the land between the Ganges and the Jumna.



should be given to a Śūdra. A woman's name should be pleasing and easy to pronounce, always ending in a long vowel. The ceremony of tonsure should be performed, for twice-born males of course, in the first or third year. When a Brāhman boy is seven years of age his father should invest him with the sacred thread. Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas should get theirs in

**The sacred  
thread**

their tenth and eleventh years respectively. If a Brāhman wishes his son to become proficient in sacred learning, the investiture should be performed in the fourth year. If Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas wish power and wealth, they also should hasten the time of investiture. The ceremony of investiture must not be delayed in the case of a Brāhman beyond his sixteenth year, in that of a Kṣatriya beyond his twenty-second, and of a Vaiśya beyond his twenty-fourth. When these periods have expired, and it is found that a young man belonging to these three castes has not been invested with the sacred thread, he must be reckoned as an outcaste and held in contempt by all Aryans. With such a person a Brāhman must have no dealings.

Students should wear under-garments made of wool, flax or hemp. Their upper-garments should be the skins of antelopes, deer, or he-goats. This in accordance with the order of their castes. A Brāhman's girdle should be a triple cord of munj grass, a Kṣatriya's a bow-string, a Vaiśya's should be made of hemp. They should carry staffs, made of different kinds of wood. A Kṣatriya's staff should reach his forehead, a Vaiśya's his nose. These staffs should be straight and without blemish, not the kind of stick to frighten people. With the staff in his hand, and after worshipping the sun, a student should walk round the sacred fire from left to right and then set out to beg for food as is prescribed. At his first experience he should ask for food from his mother, sister, aunt, or from somebody who will not insult him by a refusal. Having collected as much as is necessary, he should take it to his teacher, and having shewn him what he has got, begin to eat with his face towards the east, having first sipped some water. If a student looks towards the east, while he eats, he will obtain long life; if he looks towards the south, he will become famous; from the west

**Begging for food**

he will get prosperity, and from the north truth. A man should bathe both before and after eating. He should also sprinkle some water in his eyes, ears and nostrils. A man should eat his food with a thankful heart, never eat too much and only twice a day. The practice of eating too much is injurious to a man's health and reputation. It also robs him of heavenly bliss. When the food one gets is worshipped it imparts strength. Eaten without reverence no vigour is secured. Different parts of the hand are sacred to different gods and the spirits of the departed. A man, in consequence, needs to be very careful as to what part of the hand he uses to sip water. After sipping water three times he should wipe his mouth twice. If he knows the sacred law, and desires to obtain purity, he must use the pure part of his hand and drink water that is neither hot nor boiling. He should do so in a place apart from others and looking towards the east or north. A Brāhman is purified when the water reaches his heart. It is enough for a Śūdra if it touches the lips. There are also regulations as to when the ceremony of hair-clipping should be performed and the manner of wearing the sacred thread.

As for women of these three castes, the same ceremonies, so far as they apply, should be performed. There is, however, for women no investiture with the sacred thread, nor is it permitted to recite any texts from the Veda. A woman's rite of initiation is her marriage; when she serves her husband she is, as it were, living in the house of a teacher, while her household duties are equal to the daily worship of the sacred fire.

These are the rules of initiation for the twice born. By following out these rules the youth acquires his 'second birth', and progress in holiness is made possible. Having been duly initiated the student can begin his proper studies. First of all, his teacher must expound to him the rules of purification, as well as those relating to rites and customs: the management of the sacred fire, and the duties of morning and evening worship. No student shall begin to read the Veda until he has sipped water in the prescribed manner, put on clean clothes, and brought his members under proper control. At the beginning and end of

**Ceremonies  
for women**

**Rules for  
students**

each lecture he should clasp his teacher's feet. He should also pronounce the sacred syllable OM before and after his lesson. If he does not do so, he will forget all that he has learned. Before venturing to pronounce such a sacred syllable he must seat himself on kuśa grass, which has its points turned towards the east, and sanctify himself by three suppressions of the breath. Prajāpati, the lord of creatures, milked out from the three Vedas the letters AUM: the three Vyāhrtis (*Bhūr*,

OM  
Vyhartis  
Gayatri

*Bhuvah, Svar*), while the Gāyatrī verse, which is sacred to Savitr, was produced from Ṛig Veda.<sup>1</sup> If a Brāhman repeat the sacred syllable OM, the three words *Bhūr, Bhuvah, Svar*, and the Gāyatrī, both morning and evening, he acquires as much religious merit as if he had recited the whole Veda. If he repeat them a thousand times within a month, he will be delivered from even a great sin. The letters AUM, the OM, the three Vyāhrtis, and the Gāyatrī verse are the portal of the Veda and lead to union with Brahmā. Nothing surpasses the Gāyatrī. Vedic rites, burnt-offerings and sacrifices will pass away, but the syllable OM will never pass away. It is the Supreme Brahma himself, it is Prajāpati, the Lord of Creatures. An offering of muttered prayers is ten times more efficacious than a Vedic sacrifice, a prayer that is inaudible to others is a hundred times more efficacious, but a mental recitation is a thousand times more powerful. It is by repeating the sacred text that a Brāhman attains the highest goal. He may perform or he may neglect the sacrifices as set forth and enjoined in the Veda, but he is the true Brāhman who befriends all creatures, that is, does not offer animal sacrifices and thus abstains from cruelty.

A man has eleven organs—ear, skin, eye, tongue, nose, hand, feet, the organs of excretion, generation and speech, and the mind. It is the duty of a wise man to keep these organs under control. For the senses run wild among alluring sensualities, and he should hold them in like a charioteer with restive steeds. Desire can never be satisfied. The more it is fed the more powerful it grows. It is like a consuming fire. Renunciation

Control of  
organs

<sup>1</sup> See Note C, OM, etc.



of all pleasure is best. But better than abstinence is the way of knowledge. By the pursuit of knowledge a man can control his passions completely. The study of the Vedas, austerities, gifts, sacrifice, and self-imposed restraints can secure no rewards for the man whose heart is stained with sensuality. The really self-controlled man is he who is influenced by nothing he sees or hears or touches or smells, unmoved by neither joy nor sorrow. Nor does he need to starve his body by the practice of Yoga. But let him beware lest even one organ escapes from his control. He will be like the water-carrier's leather bag with a single hole in it. All his wisdom will trickle away even as the water does. Let him stand, then, and repeat the Gāyatrī in the early morning till the sun appears, and in the evening let him sit and repeat the Gāyatrī till the stars begin to shine. By so doing he will remove the sins of which he has been guilty. Should he fail to stand and sit as directed, he ought to be treated as if he were a Śūdra, deprived of all the rights and duties of an Aryan. The Brāhman who keeps himself under control, even though he knows the Gāyatrī verse and nothing more, is a better man than he who knows the three Vedas but does not control himself and eats all kinds of food.

It is very wrong to explain the Veda to anyone who asks for information in an improper manner; nor should it be explained until a request is made. The person

**When to explain the Veda** who explains it without being asked and the person who asks a question improperly will either die or incur one another's hatred. To teach those who give no gifts, or to teach where no respect is shewn, is like sowing seed in barren land. Better to die than to sow seed in barren soil. Deliver not thy treasure to the scorner. The man who acquires knowledge of the Veda without permission, is guilty of stealing the Veda and will go down to hell.

There are lengthy rules as to the reverence that should be shewn to one's superiors and the aged; the language to be employed and the forms that are appropriate. If a Brāhman does not know how to return a salutation, he is no better than a Śūdra. Reverence for the aged secures long life, knowledge, fame and strength. A Brāhman of ten years, however, must be reckoned as the father of a Kṣatriya who is one hundred



years old, while a Śūdra over ninety years of age is worthy of honour even among those possessed of divine learning. A Snātaka (a Brāhman who has become a householder) is more worthy of honour than a king. Should a king and a Snātaka meet on the road, it is the king's duty to give way. The teacher who faithfully performs his duties is both father and mother to his pupil and must never be offended. For such a teacher has given not a physical but a spiritual birth to his disciple, and has secured for him exemption from age and death. It is not wealth nor grey hairs nor powerful friends that make a man great. The great one is he who knows the Veda and the Vedāṅgas.<sup>1</sup> You are not venerable because your hair is white. The child who knows the Veda is reckoned venerable by the gods. An ignorant Brāhman is like an elephant made of wood or an antelope made of leather. They have nothing but the name. A barren cow and an ignorant Brāhman are alike. The man who recites the Veda every day for a year will find that for him unceasing fountains of sweet milk and sour milk, honey and clarified butter, have begun to flow.

In teaching others, a Brāhman must always avoid giving pain. He should use sweet and gentle speech. Let him not

**A true Brahman** injure others in thought or in deed. Let him refrain from cutting words. To make men afraid of him, is to shut against them the door of heaven. A Brāhman should shun worldly honour as he would shun poison; he should seek for disrespect, as he would seek for nectar. He who is scorned, can sleep with an easy mind, and with an easy mind pass through life. But the man who scorns is utterly destroyed. An Aryan must study the whole Veda with the Upaniṣads.<sup>1</sup> This is the greatest austerity he can perform. The neglect of the Veda by a twice-born brings him with his descendants to the condition of a Śūdra. But he must not repeat any verse of the Veda prior to initiation, because until the time of his initiation he is on the level of a Śūdra. A student residing with his teacher should daily control his senses, worship the gods, offer libations to them, as well as to the sages and the manes, and place fuel on the sacred fire. He should avoid honey, meat, perfume and garlands. He should keep away from

<sup>1</sup> See Note D. Veda and Vedāṅgas, p. 44.

women, from everything sweet that has turned acid. He should do no injury to any living creature. He should use neither shoes nor umbrella. He should not dance or sing or play. He should refrain from anger, covetousness and evil desire; from gambling, falsehood and idle talk. He should always sleep alone and conserve his manhood.

It is one of a student's daily tasks to bring water, flowers, cow-dung, earth and kuśa grass, as much as his teacher may require, and thereafter go and beg for food. He must not beg from the relatives of his teacher nor from his own, unless there should happen to be no other persons to whom he can go. As he begs from house to house, he must speak to no one and have his senses under control. He must beg from no house when the owner has been guilty of a deadly sin. On his return he must bring wood from a distance, and with it make an offering to the sacred fire both morning and evening. If a student, except in the case of illness, fail for seven days to go begging and to offer wood to the sacred fire he has broken his vow and must do penance. It is forbidden to a student to eat the food of one person only. He must eat only the food that he has gathered from house to house. By so doing, he acquires as much merit as a man does by fasting. He may, however, when attending a feast in honour of the gods, or the spirits of the dead, eat as much as he pleases of the food offered by the individual who gives the feast. These duties, here laid down for mendicants, only apply to Brāhmans. They do not apply to Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas.

A student must always remain standing in the presence of his teacher, until he obtains permission to sit down. His body, with the exception of his right arm, must be well covered. In his master's presence, he ought to eat less and wear coarser clothing than he does. When commanded to sit down, he may do so, but on a lower seat than that of his preceptor. He must always refer to the teacher, even when absent, in respectful language, and should he hear anything said in his dispraise, even though it is true, he must close his ears and depart at once. A student, who criticises his teacher, however true his words may be, will in his next birth be born as an ass. If he falsely abuses him,

**Duties of a student**

**Reverence for teacher**

he will be born as a dog. Should he live at his master's expense, he will become a worm. When the wife of his teacher belongs to the same caste, he shall give her the same respect as her husband receives. But he must not wash her feet, shampoo her body, or dress her hair. Nor may he clasp her feet unless she is old. Because it is in the nature of women in this world to seduce men. A wise man is always on his guard in the presence of females. Even when alone with his mother, sister and daughter, he must beware, for the senses are powerful and can deprive even a wise man of his wisdom. It is a great sin to be asleep at either sunrise or sunset. Should a student be guilty of this sin, he must fast for the whole of the next day, constantly repeating the sacred Gāyatrī.

Some say that the chief good in this world consists of virtue and wealth ; some that it is to be found in wealth and pleasure ; while virtue alone and wealth alone are applauded by others. But the true opinion is that man's chief good is to be found in all three taken together. The pain and trouble which a father and mother undergo in producing and rearing children cannot be repaid in a hundred years. A man should therefore always strive to please his parents and his teacher. Father, mother and teacher are indeed equal to the three worlds, the three principal castes, the three Vedas, and the three sacred fires. As long as they live a man must wait upon them every day, inform them of all that he does and thinks and says. By acting in this manner he will acquire unending bliss in heaven.

A believer in the scripture may learn the doctrine of liberation from a man of the lowest caste, and there is nothing to prevent him from getting a wife as bright as a gem, from the same low order. You can extract nectar from poison, and wisdom from a child. You can learn how to live even from an enemy, and obtain gold from base metal. Why should it be impossible to get wisdom and a wife from those who are base-born.

The Brāhman, who passes his whole life as a student and never breaks his vow, will at death pass to the most exalted regions and never be re-born among men.



## NOTE B

### The Carvakas

The Cārvākas were the materialists of ancient India. They accepted nothing but the testimony of the senses, and acknowledged only the four principles: earth, air, fire, and water. From these four, they said that intelligence was produced. They held that there was no difference between the soul and the body, and that all the phenomena of the world were spontaneously produced. See Monier Williams' *Indian Wisdom*, pp. 120-22.

In the *Sarva Darśana Saṁgraha* of Mādhava Āchārya, translated by Cowell and Gough (Trubner), we have a very interesting quotation made by the author from Bṛhaspati, given as a summary of the teaching of this school. It shows what the orthodox had to contend against 2,000 years ago:—

'There is no heaven, no final liberation, nor any soul in any other world.

'Nor do the actions of the four castes produce any real effect.

'The Agnihotra, the three Vedas, the ascetic's three staves and smearing oneself with ashes,

'Were made by nature as the livelihood of those destitute of knowledge and manliness.

'If a beast slain in the Jyotiṣṭoma rite will itself go to heaven,

'Why then does not the sacrificer forthwith offer his own father?

'If the Śrāddha produces gratification to beings who are dead.

'Then here, too, in the case of travellers when they start, it is needless to give provisions for the journey.'

'If beings in heaven are gratified by our offering the Śrāddha here,

'Then why not give the food down below to those who are standing on the house-top?

'While life remains, let a man live happily, let him feed on clarified butter, even though he runs into debt;

'When once the body becomes ashes, how can it ever return again?

'If he who departs from the body, goes to another world,

'How is it that he comes not back again, restless for love of his kindred?

'Hence it is only as a means of livelihood that Brāhmins have established here

'All these ceremonies for the dead—there is no other fruit anywhere.

'The three authors of the Vedas were buffoons, knaves and demons.

'All the well-known formulæ of the pandits, *jarpharī*, *turpharī*, etc.

'And all the obscene rites for the queen commanded in the Horse sacrifice,

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<sup>1</sup> I.e. his people at home can feed him daily by means of oblations.



'They were invented by buffoons, and so all the various kinds of presents to the priests,

'While the eating of flesh was similarly commanded by night prowling demons.'

'Such is the pleasant consummation,' says Mādhava Āchārya sarcastically.

#### NOTE C

#### OM (AUM)

Monier Williams suggests that the three letters AUM were originally the initial letters of the names of Fire, Wind and Sun, that is Agni, Vayu and Mitra. In later time they were taken to typify Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, the Hindu triad, who are concerned in the evolution, maintenance and disintegration of the universe. (See pp. 10, 44, of *Brāhmanism and Hinduism*.)

#### Bhur, Bhuvah, Svar

*Bhūr*=Earth. *Bhuvah*=Atmosphere. *Svar*=Heaven.

These sacred words (Vyāhṛti=Sanskrit,—Utterance, Speech, Sound) are therefore the names of the three worlds. (See, as above, pp. 102, 403.)

#### Gayatri

The Gāyatrī or Sāvitrī verse is to be found in the R̥g Veda, Third Maṇḍala, 62.10. It is as follows in English: 'Let us meditate on that excellent glory of the divine vivifying Sun (Savitṛ), may he enlighten our understandings.'

## CHAPTER III

### THE HOUSEHOLDER, OR THE SECOND STAGE OF A BRĀHMAN'S LIFE. MARRIAGE AND OTHER RELIGIOUS RITES

THE life of a student should be continued for thirty-six years, during which time he is to study the three Vedas.<sup>1</sup>

#### Marriage

Should he have mastered these books in less than that time, he is free to depart and enter in the life of a married man or householder. Before setting out, he must perform the ceremony of ablution and make a present to his teacher. When he gets home, his friends ought to deck him with garlands and give him the gift of a cow. He should marry a woman of his own caste. She must not be a Sapiṇḍā on the mother's side,<sup>2</sup> nor belong to the same family as his father. In seeking a wife, he should not go to those who neglect the sacred rites and are ignorant of the Veda. A family suffering from consumption, epilepsy, weak digestion and leprosy should be avoided. Nor should a maiden, with reddish hair, or deformed or sickly, or one with too much or too little hair on her body, be chosen. A girl who is talkative, in whose family only girls are born, or one who is called after a star, a tree, a river or a mountain should be shunned. The girl to wed is the girl with a pleasant name, with a gait like an elephant or a flamingo, with small teeth and soft limbs. His first wife must be of his own caste. But if he marries again, he can marry wives from other castes. A Śūdra can marry a Śūdra woman only. A Vaiśya can take a second wife from among the Śūdras. A Kṣatriya can, in addition to his Kṣatriya wife, marry a Śūdra and a Vaiśya. A Brāhman can

<sup>1</sup> The three Vedas are the Rg Veda, Yajur Veda and Sāma Veda. The Atharva Veda, or fourth Veda, was not reckoned as a Veda till later times.

<sup>2</sup> A Sapiṇḍa is a kinsman connected by the offering of the funeral cake (*piṇḍa*) to the Manes of certain relations, viz., father, grandfather, great grandfather, etc., including the direct descendants of four persons, or, according to others, seven persons in an ascending and descending line. See Monier Williams' *Sanskrit Dictionary*.

marry a Śūdra, a Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya, in addition to the wife he has obtained from his own caste. But we never read in any ancient book of a Brāhman or a Kṣatriya choosing his first wife from among the Śūdras. It is to be noted, however, that further on in this chapter, there is a verse which declares that the Brāhman who marries a Śūdra woman goes to hell and can find no expiation for his sin.<sup>1</sup>

There are eight forms of marriage. The Rākṣasa rite of marriage, that is the forcible abduction of a maiden after the house has been broken open and her kinsmen slain, is declared to be valid for Kṣatriyas; the Paiśaca rite, when a girl is seduced during sleep or in a state of intoxication, is said to be valid for Vaiśyas and Śūdras; the Gāndharva rite, when a man and a maid of their own will live together, is said to be lawful for Brāhmanas; the Āsura rite is the giving by the bridegroom of as much wealth as he can afford to the kinsmen of the bride. It is recognised as valid for all the castes, except the Brāhmanas. But in a later verse, these four forms of marriage are condemned with the assurance that cruel and wicked sons will be born from such unions. The forms of marriage which receive commendation are as follows: the Brāhma, the Daiva, the Prājāpatya and the Ārsha. They liberate a man's ancestors and descendants for many generations, and sons are born who are acquainted with the Vedas. They secure wealth and fame, beauty and virtue, long life and happiness for a hundred years. Unfortunately, these blessed forms of marriage are open only to members of the Brāhmanical caste. The soldier, the merchant and the low caste must be content with forms of marriage which, though described as lawful, are at the same time condemned as evil.<sup>2</sup> In connection with the Āsura form of marriage, it is said that the father who accepts even the smallest gift from the bridegroom's people, is to be reckoned as having sold his daughter.

<sup>1</sup> More recent law-givers maintain that the laws of Manu were only intended for the first three ages of the world, and that in the present evil age, twice-born men can only marry women of their own caste. The author of *Parāśara's Code* says, 'The laws of different ages are different. Manu's law-book belongs to the Kṛta, or first, age.' See *Indian Wisdom*, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that in the Mahābhārata Kṛṣṇa commends to Arjuna the forcible seduction of his sister, Subhadrā. Bk, I, C. 221.



Women should be held in honour by their fathers, husbands, brothers and brothers-in-law. The gods are pleased when women are honoured. All religious ceremonies are fruitless when they are treated with disrespect. If a woman pronounces a curse against the people of her house because of the treatment she receives, they will very soon come to grief. If a man wishes to be happy, he should on festivals and other holidays present his wife with clothes, ornaments and pleasant food. That is a happy house where husband and wife are pleased with one another. But how can there be sunshine in the house if the wife is ugly.

**Honour for  
women.**

Great families soon suffer calamities, if they neglect religious rites, fail to study the Veda and do not pay respect to Brāhmans. But that Brāhman also will be destroyed, who engages in trade, manual crafts or agriculture, who buys and sells, or marries Śūdra woman only. However poor a Brāhman may be, if he knows the Veda, he has acquired wealth and fame. There are five religious rites, which the householder should perform every day. (1) The study and teaching of the Veda is the sacrifice to the sages or to Brahmā, (2) the offering of food and water is the sacrifice to the spirits of the dead, (3) the burnt offering is what he presents to the gods, (4) the presenting of rice or other food (*bali*) is what he gives to the Bhūtas (goblins or ghosts), (5) hospitality to strangers is his offering to men. If any one neglects these five duties, he lives not even though he breathes. On the other hand, the man who duly performs these five rites every day, supports the whole creation, both what moves and what does not move. Añ oblation cast into the fire reaches the sun; the sun sends rain. Were it not for rain no food would grow. Living creatures depend on food. In this way all living creatures depend on the householder and the rites which he performs. He is the support of all, and there is no mode of life more honourable than his. The Brāhman householder should cast into the sacred fire a portion of food in honour of the following deities: Agni, Soma, Viśvadevāh (all the gods), Dhanvantari, Prajāpati, the goddess of the new moon and that of the full moon, Indra,

**The five great  
sacrifices**



Yama, Varuṇa, the Maruts and Śrī, the goddess of prosperity. The goblins who roam by day and those who roam by night should not be forgotten. The householder should scatter food near his door, calling on the Maruts, and at the head of his bed, calling upon Śrī. Nor should he forget to place upon the ground some food for dogs, out-castes and Cāṇḍālas,<sup>1</sup> crows and insects, as well as for those suffering from diseases which have befallen them because of sins committed in a former birth. The Brāhman, who in obedience to life, will walk by these rules gives honour to all living things each day of his straight path to the highest abodes of bliss, while the ordinary twice-born householder, the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya, by giving alms will obtain as much merit as if they had presented a cow to their teacher.

A gift made to a learned Brāhman saves from misfortune and even from a great sin. To make offerings, however, to Brāhmans ignorant of the law, serves no purpose whatever. If a Brāhman is treated

**Hospitality** with disrespect in any house he enters, he takes away with him all the merit the householder may have acquired, even though he may have sat between the five fires, or subsisted on grains of corn that he has laboriously gleaned in time of harvest.<sup>2</sup> A good man is always willing to supply grass and a place to sit down in, water and a kind word. There are some people who always try to live at the expense of others. Such persons, and those who live in the same village, should not be considered as guests or as deserving of hospitality. Never turn away a man who comes to your house when the sun is setting, and offer him the same food as you are eating yourself. A Kṣatriya who comes to a Brāhman's house is not to be reckoned as a guest. After his Brāhman guests have eaten, the Brāhman householder may feed the Kṣatriya. As to Vaiśyas and Śūdras, the Brāhman may allow them to eat with his servants. By so doing, he will make it plain that he is a benevolent person. The man who eats before he has fed his guests

<sup>1</sup> Cāṇḍālas were the offspring of Brāhman women and low-caste men.

<sup>2</sup> Indian ascetics still practise this rite, seated in the centre of a square at whose four corners fires are lighted, the sun constituting the fifth fire.

will, after death, be devoured by dogs and vultures. The man who cooks food for himself alone, eats nothing but sin.

When offerings are made to the gods and to the spirits of the dead, it is a mistake to think that there is any virtue in feeding a large company. To feed one learned Brāhman is better than feeding a million men ignorant of the Veda. Feed one learned Brāhman and make him pleased with his reception, and you will secure far more merit in heaven. For every mouthful that an ignorant Brāhman swallows at a sacrifice, the giver of the feast will have to swallow a red-hot iron ball in the next world. It is not necessary to be so careful about the Brāhmans you invite to a rite in honour of the gods, but you cannot be too careful about the qualifications and birth of the Brāhmans who attend a funeral feast. It is improper to invite

**People to be avoided**

friends to a funeral feast for the sake of friendship. Your relatives may be invited, but you must see to it that the following persons are not present. They include temple-priests, physicians, shopkeepers and sellers of meat, persons with black teeth or deformed nails, those who suffer from consumption, usurers, actors, sellers of soma and anyone who has made a sea-voyage, a one-eyed man, the son of a remarried woman, a Brāhman who teaches Śūdras or who teaches for a fee, the keeper of a gambling house, the husband of a re-married woman, a blind man, a reviler of the Vedas, a man who trains elephants, horses, oxen and camels, a shepherd, a carrier of dead bodies, a man with a club-foot and a person who lives by agriculture. These, and such as these, should not be entertained at a funeral feast. The elder brother, whose younger brother marries before him, the younger brother and his wife, the person who gives her in marriage, and the priest who officiates at the wedding, will every one of them go to hell. The man who acts in a lascivious manner with the widow of his deceased brother, even though she is appointed to bear a child by him in accordance with the sacred law, must be termed 'the husband of a remarried woman.'<sup>1</sup> The food which such evil persons consume at a funeral feast never reaches the spirits of the dead for whom they are intended, but enters the maws of evil spirits and demons instead.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter IX and Note E on Niyoga.

On the other hand, great benefits follow from a funeral feast when the invited Brāhmanas are learned expounders of the Veda, have at some time given in a gift a thousand cows, or are one hundred years old. The Brāhman, who stays away, after being invited to a feast either in honour of the gods or the spirits of the dead, will be born in the next life as a dog. The spirits of the dead are primeval deities. They are free from anger and desire, intent on purity and possessed of great virtues. The different classes of manes are descended from the ten Prajāpatis, Marīci and the others, who sprang from Manu, the son of Brahmā. From Marīci came the manes of the gods; from Atri the manes of the demons, snake-deities and Gandharvas; the Brāhmanas are descended from Bhṛgu; the Kṣatriyas from Aṅgiras; the Vaiśyas from Pulastya; and the Śūdras from Vasiṣṭha.<sup>1</sup> From the ten Prajāpatis or sages sprang the manes; from the manes, the gods; and from the gods, the whole created world. It is more important to worship the manes than to worship the gods. The Śrāddha, or funeral feast, however, should always begin and end with a rite in honour of the gods. In preparing ground for the ceremony it must be smeared with cow-dung and should slope towards the south. The manes are fond of an open place towards the river. Now listen to the manner in which the sacrifice should be performed. The Brāhmanas who have been invited to honour the sacrifice with their presence, shall be accommodated with seats specially prepared and separate from the others. On these seats kuśa grass should be placed. The Brāhmanas should next be honoured with garlands and perfumes: and first of all those Brāhmanas who were invited in name of the gods. They should next be presented with water, sesame seeds and blades of kuśa grass. Thereafter oblations should be made to the sacred fire, and then to the gods, Agni, Soma, and Yama. The Brāhmanas and gods having thus been honoured, the offerings to the manes can then

<sup>1</sup> The manes, or Pitrs, are in the Code of Manu not merely any one individual's particular ancestors, but the progenitors of mankind generally as well as of gods, demons and other beings. Here we find still another theory as to the process of creation and the origin of the four castes.



be made. If no sacrificial fire is available, the offerings may be placed in the hands of a Brāhman, in virtue of the sacred text, which says, 'What fire is, even so is a Brāhman,' for the Brāhman are, in truth, the ancient deities of the funeral sacrifice, being free from anger, easily pleased and always desirous of man's welfare. The sacrificing Brāhman must see to it that the ceremonies close in such a manner that all will be facing the south. He shall next make three cakes from what is left of the sacrificial food and place them carefully on kuśa grass. Then wiping his hands with kuśa grass, sipping water and turning towards the north with three suppressions of the breath, he shall worship the gods of the six seasons and the manes. When he has done this, he shall smell the cakes and cause the Brāhman who are present to eat a very small portion of them. When the cakes are offered to the Brāhman, they must be held in both hands, otherwise evil spirits will be sure to snatch them away. Thereafter the feast proper begins and includes various kinds of food, including flesh meat. The giver of the feast must be careful not to shed any tears, because in that case also the food will go to evil spirits. Should he tell a lie, the food will become the portion of dogs.

He must give the Brāhman the kind of food they like best, press them to eat, and say how nice it is. He should also ask them riddles from the Veda. The manes like that to be done. The food should be very hot, and the guests should eat in silence. When the food is hot and nobody speaks, the manes really eat the food. The guests must uncover their heads, put off their sandals, and not look towards the south. Otherwise the demons will get the food they eat. A Cāṇḍāla, a pig, a cock, a dog and a eunuch must not look at the Brāhman when they are eating. What is left over from the feast is to be reckoned as an offering for those children whose bodies were not cremated. What falls to the ground during the feast should be given to those servants who are worthy, but never on any account to one who is of the Śūdra caste. Such a foolish act will send the giver straight to hell. Should any of the guests cohabit the same day with a Śūdra woman, the spirits of his forefathers will have to lie in her excrement for a month. When the Brāhman guests have departed, the sacrificer shall



take what is left of the three sacrificial cakes and give it to a cow, a Brāhman or a goat. He may, if he likes, cast it into the sacred fire or into water. The sacrificer's wife, if she is anxious for a son, may eat the middlemost of the three cakes. By doing so, she will, in due time, give birth to a son who will acquire wisdom, fame and wealth, endowed with long life and happiness, and he in his turn will be the father of many children adorned with every virtue. It should be remembered that the spirits of the dead are better pleased with one kind of food than with another. Rice, barley, roots and fruits content them for a month. The flesh of boars and buffaloes keeps them happy for eleven months. But the flesh of a long-eared white he-goat affords them a satisfaction that lasts for twelve years. Best of all is the flesh of a rhinoceros and a red goat eaten with the vegetable Kālaśāka and a fish called Mahāśalka. Such a meal yields a satisfaction that lasts for ever. The manes are specially delighted with milk and rice, mixed with honey and clarified butter, and they pray that a man may be born in their family, who will supply them such a glorious feast.

## NOTE D

### Vedas and other Sacred Books

As references have been made, and more will be made, to the various sacred books, a summary of them for the benefit of the general reader is given below.

1. The three Vedas, the Hymns or Vedas proper are (a) Ṛg Veda, (b) Sāma Veda, (c) Yajur Veda.

(a) is the oldest, and to a very large extent the source from which (b) and (c) were drawn.

It is said in Manu 1.23, that from fire, wind and sun, the Lord drew forth the threefold eternal Veda, called Ṛg, Yajur and Sāma, for the due performance of sacrifice.

These three were in existence and recognised as 'revelation' long before (d) the Atharva Veda, had been recognised or compiled. It is a handbook of spells and cursings, and Manu's only reference to it conforms to its contents. He says, in 11.33, that a Brāhman should use without hesitation the sacred texts revealed by Atharvan and Aṅgiras, in seeking to injure an enemy, because speech is the weapon of the Brāhman.

2. The second portion of the Vedas is the Brāhmaṇas. Their purpose is to explain the significance of the sacrificial ritual. The four sets of hymns have their corresponding Brāhmaṇas. There is no distinct reference to the Brāhmaṇas as such in Manu.

3. The Upaniṣads are reckoned as the third and final portion of the Vedas, hence the name which is sometimes given to them: Vedānta, or end of the Veda. 'The pantheistic groundwork of their doctrines was later developed into the Vedānta system, which is still the favourite philosophy of the modern Hindus. . . . They really represent a new religion. Their aim is no longer the obtaining of earthly happiness and afterwards bliss in the abode of Yama by sacrificing correctly to the gods, but release from mundane existence by the absorption of the individual soul in the world-soul through correct knowledge.' (Macdonell's *Sanskrit Literature*.)

In 6.29 of Manu it is said the ascetic must study the various sacred texts in the Upaniṣads, and in 11.263 that Brāhman is declared to be completely freed from all sins who thrice repeats the three Vedas with the secret texts, the Upaniṣads. There are also two references in the second chapter to the *secret portions* of the Veda, presumably the Upaniṣads.

Though these three portions of the Veda differ widely in thought and teaching and are widely separated in time, they are all reckoned as parts of *revelation*, and are included in the term Veda.

### Vedāngas

Tradition or Smṛti begins with the six Vedāṅgas, or limbs, for supporting the Veda. There are quite a number of references to these in Manu.

(a) Kalpa, a ceremonial directory (2.140). (b) Śikṣā, 'the science' of pronunciation. (c) Chhandas, metre. (d) Nirukta, exposition of difficult words (12.111). (e) Vyākaraṇa, grammar. (f) Jyotiṣa, astronomy.

The Aṅgas are referred to generally in 2.242, 3.184; the six Aṅgas in 3.185; all the Aṅgas in 4.98 as subjects which must be studied. See also 5.82, 7.85, and 9.41.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HOUSEHOLDER, HIS LIFE AND MORALS

IN securing the means of subsistence, a Brāhman must see to it that he causes no pain, or at least as little pain as possible, to any living creature. He may live by Rta

**A Brahman's  
means  
of livelihood**

(truth) or Amṛta (nectar); by Mṛta (death) or Pramṛta (that which causes many deaths); or even by Satyāṇṛta (a mixture of falsehood and truth), but never by Śvavṛtti (a dog's mode of life). These are six ways, in all, and their meanings are as follows: (1) Rta is earning one's livelihood by gleaning corn; (2) Amṛta, by receiving what is given unasked; (3) Mṛta, food got by begging; (4) Pramṛta, is agriculture, so called because the plough kills many small creatures; (5) trade and money lending is Satyāṇṛta, and even by that a Brāhman may earn his living; but (6) Śvavṛtti, or service, a Brāhman must always shun. A Brāhman may be the owner of enough to fill a storehouse. He may possess just enough to fill a jar. He may collect at one time what will satisfy his needs for three days. But the person most worthy of praise is the man who makes no provision for the morrow. By his virtuous conduct he has conquered the world. The happy man is he who is content with what he has and does not seek to follow the ways of men in earning a livelihood. The search for wealth interferes with the study of the Veda, and the study of the Veda is the main object of a Brāhman's life. If he will remain devoted to that, he will in the end obtain all that he desires. In word and thought and dress, he must remember his high calling, the work he has to do, and the race to which he belongs. He must, therefore, be zealous in studying the sacred books and the Nigamas, books which expound the meaning of the Veda,<sup>1</sup> as well as those which teach how a man may acquire wealth and other salutary things. The Brāhman is once more reminded that he must never neglect

<sup>1</sup> Commentators say that 'the sacred books' refer to the Itihāsas (histories), Purāṇas and books dealing with medicine and astrology. The Nigamas are included in the Vedāṅgas, under Nirukta.



the five sacrifices to the sages,<sup>1</sup> gods, manes, evil spirits and men. It is possible, however, to offer them in a symbolical manner by means of one's breath and speech, while there are other Brāhmanas, gifted with the eye of knowledge, who make use of knowledge alone. These higher methods of observance, say the commentators, are set forth in the Upaniṣads.

No Brāhman, if he wishes length of days, should eat new grain or meat, without first offering a portion to the sacred

**Miscellaneous  
rules**

fire. Persons who argue against the Veda and those cat-like rogues who are hypocritical and covetous should never be greeted by a Brāhman. The man who bites his nails will go to perdition. A Brāhman should keep his beard, hair and nails clipped. It is wrong to look at the sun when rising or setting, or in the middle of the day. It is wrong to step over a rope to which a calf is tied, or to run when it is raining. One should always pass a cow, a Brāhman and honey with the right in their direction. It is wrong to eat in the company of your wife, nor should you look at her when she is eating, nor when she yawns or sneezes. Never bathe naked, and be very careful when and where you attend to the calls of nature. Don't place a fire under your bed. Don't blow a fire with your mouth. Keep your right arm uncovered in a cow-pen and before a Brāhman. Don't interrupt a cow that is suckling her calf, and don't tell anybody about it. If you see a rainbow in the sky, mention the fact to no one. Avoid a village that is full of sickness and where the law is not kept. Live in no country where Śūdras rule, nor in one that is subject to heretics. Never drink water out of the joined palms. Eat nothing from which the oil has been extracted. Neither dance nor sing nor grind your teeth nor slap your limbs. Never wash your feet in a vessel of white brass. Never wear cast-off shoes and garments. Never use an old garland or an old waterpot. To ride on the back of cows and oxen is improper. If you tear up grass with your nails, or stamp the earth with your feet, you will go to hell. Eat while your feet are still wet after bathing. If you observe this rule, you will enjoy long life. On the other hand, it is very wrong to go to bed with wet feet. Never give advice

<sup>1</sup> The sacrifice to the sages or authors of the Vedas is sometimes called the sacrifice to Brahma; see 3.70.

to a Śūdra, and *never explain the sacred law to him. If you do, you will go to hell.* Don't scratch your head with both hands at once. Never pull your own hair or another man's in anger. Take no presents from a king who is not of the Kṣatriya caste, nor from a butcher nor a publican, nor from an oil-press man nor from the keeper of a brothel. One king is as bad as ten brothels; one brothel is as bad as ten taverns; one tavern is as bad as ten oil-presses; and one oil-press is as bad as ten slaughter-houses. They say that one king is equal in wickedness to a butcher who keeps one hundred thousand slaughter houses. It is, therefore, a great sin to accept presents from a king (presumably a king who is not a Kṣatriya). If you accept presents from a greedy king, you will go in succession to twenty-one hells, whose names are given in detail. A learned Brāhman who studies the Veda and desires happiness after death does not therefore accept presents from kings.

As to the times prescribed for reading the Veda, the following rules are set down. The Veda itself should be read during the bright half of the month and the

**When to read the Veda**      Vedāngas<sup>1</sup> during the dark half. A Brāhman should recite the Veda distinctly, and never in the presence of a Śūdra, or of a man who lives like a Śūdra. He ought not to read it during the rainy season, or when there is thunder and lightning. He ought not to read it when the wind can be heard at night, or when the dust blows in the day time. The recitation of the Veda ought to be stopped when there is an eclipse, when a bad smell is felt, when a man dies in the village, when the sound of weeping is heard, when jackals howl, when dogs bark, when donkeys bray, and when one is suffering from indigestion. After being at a funeral feast, and when he is attending to the calls of nature, a Brāhman must not even think of the sacred texts. Should a cat, a dog, a snake pass between the teacher and his pupil, the study of the Veda must be stopped for a night and a day. By daily reciting the Veda, by practising austerities, by doing no injury to any creature, by observing the rites of purification, a man remembers what happened to him in former births.

<sup>1</sup> See Note D, p. 44.

It is wrong to step on the shadow cast by a religious teacher, a king, a Brāhman, a reddish brown animal and the images of the gods. In this world there is nothing that will deprive you of long life more than criminal attention to another man's wife. Never despise a learned Brāhman, a Kṣatriya or a snake. When treated with disrespect, these three are able to destroy you. Have nothing to do with undertakings which depend on the enterprise of others. Earnestly pursue what depends on yourself. Never despise yourself on account of former failures. Keep on trying as long as you live, and never despair of achieving your purpose. Say what is true, say what is pleasing, never utter a disagreeable untruth; that is the eternal law. Let a man say, well and good; or let him say, well, only. No purpose is served by fruitless altercation and enmity with anyone. Never insult a person destitute of knowledge, a man of low birth, an aged man or one who is deformed. Beware of anger, pride, harshness, hatred, contempt for the gods and criticism of the Veda. Never strike anybody except a son and a disciple. A son and a disciple may be corrected by the rod. The twice-born man who merely threatens to strike a Brāhman will wander for one hundred years in hell. But should he strike a Brāhman with nothing more weighty than a blade of grass, that wicked one will have to spend twenty-one lives in the wombs of impure creatures. Should he chance to shed any of the Brāhman's blood, then *for every* particle of dust which drank up the Brāhman's blood, the shedder of the blood will have to spend *one* year in hell, where wild beasts will continually devour him.

The man, who lives unrighteously, who acquires wealth by evil methods, who delights in doing injury, cannot achieve happiness in this world. Never forsake righteousness, even though you suffer in consequence, for you will soon see that the wicked are overthrown. The punishment of evil does not always come quickly. Nevertheless, however slowly it may advance, retribution will in the end destroy the evil-doer utterly. If the punishment does not fall on him, it will fall upon his decendants. If his sons escape, it will fall upon his grandsons. The fruit of evil-doing never fails to be reaped. The wicked man may prosper for a while, yea, gain even



great things, and overcome his foes, but in the long run, he will perish root and branch. Take delight, then, in truthfulness, obedience to the sacred law, conduct worthy of an Aryan, and in purity; chastise your pupils; keep your tongue, your hands and your belly under control; avoid even lawful things which cause pain to others; be not crooked in your ways; avoid idle talk; injure no one in deed or in thought. Do these things and you will never come to any harm. No calamity can befall the man who earnestly adheres to good customs and the rules of good conduct, who mutters the sacred texts at the proper time and makes the offerings to the sacred fire.

A Brāhman, in virtue of his learning and holiness, may be justified in accepting gifts, but he must beware of the habit.

**Danger of gifts** The receiving of gifts very soon quenches the divine light within him. There are many rules which regulate the practice of giving and receiving, and the man who does not know the rules and accepts gold or gems, a horse or a cow, food or clothes, is reduced to ashes, like a piece of wood. The Brāhman who neglects the Veda, indulges in no austerities, but accepts gifts, goes down to hell, along with the donor. He is like the man who tries to cross a river in a boat made of stone. Even a very small gift makes the receiver like a cow in a bog. There are Brāhmans who deserve to be called cats, because of the way in which they pretend to be virtuous; and there are others, who are like herons; assuming the guise of meekness, they are at heart dishonest, and have only one object in life, that of achieving their own selfish ends. There are Brāhmans, too, who have committed some secret sin and perform penances with a view to wiping out that sin. They tell the world that they are engaging in penance, with a view to the acquiring of religious merit. They may deceive woman and Śūdras, but the wise know what they really are.

Meat should never be eaten, unless it has been first offered in a religious ceremony, nor should you eat food on which any one has sneezed, or at which a cow has smelt. Food offered by a tailor, a blacksmith, a liar, a hen-pecked man, a goldsmith, and many others, enumerated by Manu, should not be accepted. The food of a king weakens your strength, the food of a physician



is as vile as pus, that of a usurer, is like ordure. If you have eaten such food you must fast for three days. If no other food is available, a Brāhman may take raw grain, enough for one day only, from a Śūdra, but *never* food that has been cooked. A man should offer sacrifices and perform works of charity with faith. If the money expended on these things has been lawfully earned, the faithful giver obtains endless rewards. Even a very little, if given willingly and from the heart, may find a recipient who will save you from all your sins. The gift of water quenches your thirst ; the gift of a house will secure you a most excellent dwelling place ; the gift of a cow, a home in the sun ; the gift of gold, long life. But the gift of the Veda is the best of all. According to the motive which influences you in making a gift, so will be the reward. Never boast about the gifts you have made ; never boast about your austerities. By yielding to the feeling of self-satisfaction, you will lose the merit and fruit of all that you have given. If you tell a lie after offering a sacrifice it will have been in vain. Speaking evil of Brāhmans, even though they have done you harm, will deprive you of long life.

When a man dies, he goes to the other world alone. Neither father nor mother, neither wife nor son, can accompany him.

**Wealth  
that abides**      The religious merit which he has acquired only endures. Alone each man is born, and alone he dies ; alone he experiences the reward of virtue ; alone he reaps the punishment of his sins. A man's friends leave his dead body at the burning ground, leave it lying like a log of wood and depart. But his good deeds follow the soul, and bear it company through a land of gloom hard to travel. In the end they will bring him to the other world cleansed of all his sins, and clothed with a spiritual body full of light. Be persevering then in good deeds, and of a gentle spirit ; offer gifts and bear hardships patiently ; give pain to no creature, avoid those who are malignant, subdue your passions, and you will obtain heavenly bliss.

Prajāpati has said that you may take gifts even from a sinful man, if he brings them of his own accord. Because if you disdain a gift freely offered, the spirits of the dead will not eat your food for fifteen years. Falsehood is the root of all evil.

The man who is dishonest in speech is dishonest in everything. When a Brāhman has paid his debt to the great sages, to the manes and to the gods—that is, has read the Veda, begotten a son and performed the sacrifices—he should hand over everything to his son, and cease to care for worldly things. The life of the householder is over, and he must now dwell apart. Devoting himself to the third stage of a Brāhman's life, let him meditate on that which is good for the soul. Thus acting, he shall from day to day destroy his sins, and in the end be raised to the world of Brahmā.

## CHAPTER V

### RULES REGARDING LAWFUL FOOD, PURIFICATION AND WOMEN

HAVING heard the foregoing account of what duties a householder ought to perform, the sages asked Bhṛgu to explain how it was that Death had any power over Brāhmans acquainted with the Veda and obedient to the laws laid down for their caste. To this question, Bhṛgu replied that Death was always busy, seeking to shorten the lives of Brāhmans because of sins which they had committed. These sins he enumerated as follows: (1) failure to study the Veda, (2) neglecting the rules of conduct, (3) remissness in observing the prescribed rites, and (4) the eating of forbidden food. He then discoursed in

**Forbidden food** great detail on what constituted forbidden food, and gave a list of what was not allowed. It included garlic, leeks, onions, mushrooms, and all vegetables raised in manure, red gums and resins that exude from trees, the Śelu fruit, the milk of a cow that had calved less than ten days previously, rice boiled with sesame, wheat cooked with butter, a mixture of milk and sugar, flesh meat that had not been sprinkled with water and sanctified by the repetition of sacred texts, the milk of camels and all one-hoofed animals, the milk of a cow whose calf was dead or absent, the milk of all wild animals except the buffalo, the milk of women and sheep, and all foods that had become sour. It is added, however, that food made from sour milk was allowed. The following animals also are forbidden as food:—carnivorous animals and those that live in villages, one-hoofed animals, except those that are specially permitted,<sup>1</sup> the sparrow, the parrot, the starling, the Brāhmani duck, the goose (*hamsa*), the crane (*sāras*), the woodpecker, web-footed birds, the village cock and the village pig, birds that strike with their beaks and birds that scratch with

<sup>1</sup> Presumably the horse, which was sacrificed at Vedic ceremonies. It will be noted that the cow does not appear in this list of forbidden animals.

their toes, the raven, animals that eat fish, and all kinds of fish. There are, however, given later, five kinds of fish which may be eaten, three of them on all occasions, two if first offered to the gods and to the manes. Animals with five toes and those that live by themselves or are unknown are likewise forbidden as food, even though they seem to come within the list of those permitted. On the other hand, the porcupine, the hedgehog, the iguana, the rhinoceros, the tortoise and the hare are lawful food, as also domestic animals that have only one row of teeth, with the exception of the camel. If a member of the first three castes should ever knowingly eat mushrooms, garlic, onions or leeks, the flesh of a village cock or of a village pig, he must be treated as an out-caste and cannot be restored till he has performed penance. There are two forms of

**Penance** penance set down, and he may choose either of them. According to the first, his food on six successive days shall consist of the urine and the dung of cows, milk, clarified butter, sour milk, and a preparation made of kuśa grass, to be followed by a complete fast on the seventh day.<sup>1</sup> The other is the lunar penance, when the penitent for the space of a month decreases and increases his allowance of food with the waning and waxing of the moon. Once a year it will be the duty of a Brāhman to perform penance for any unlawful food which he may have eaten unwittingly. This penance involves living on one meal a day for six days, to be followed by a fast of three days.

As to birds and beasts which are lawful food, these may be killed by Brāhmans, not only in connection with sacrifices but for the sustenance of those who it is their duty to maintain (22). Agastya did so in former days, and the sacrificial cakes were made of the flesh of birds and beasts. This was the rule observed by both Brāhmans and Kṣatriyas. Bhṛgu next lays down rules as to when one may and may not eat flesh. It is permitted to eat meat when water has been sprinkled on it

<sup>1</sup> The first five of these, known as *pañc-gavya*, or five products of the cow, are still used in India for penitential purposes. They are sometimes administered in the form of a pill to Hindus who have lost caste by making a sea voyage.



accompanied by the recitation of sacred texts, when you are invited to do so by a Brāhman, when you are engaged in the performance of a sacrificial rite, and when your life is in danger. This world was created by Prajāpati for the sustenance of the vital spirit, and its proper food is therefore all that is, both moveable and immoveable. Creatures possessed of locomotion eat the things that cannot move. Animals with teeth eat those that have no teeth. Those that have hands eat those that have no hands. Those that are bold feed upon those that are timid. It is no sin, therefore, for creatures to eat the food

**When flesh may  
be eaten** which has been appointed for them. It was Brahmā himself who created both the eaters and those which are to be eaten. It is, indeed,

the rule laid down by the gods that the eating of meat offered at sacrifices is right and proper. But to eat meat at any other time is conduct worthy of demons who live on human flesh. The man who does so will, after death, be devoured by the animals whose flesh he has eaten.

On the other hand, it is very wrong for a Brāhman to refuse to eat meat when he is taking part in a sacrificial rite. If he does so, he will have to pass twenty-one lives in the form of an animal. At times the temptation to eat flesh is great. In such circumstances one is recommended to fashion butter and flour into the shape of an animal and to eat that. To kill an animal, except in connection with a sacrifice, is a very great sin, and for every single hair that the slain animal had on its body the slayer will have to experience a violent death in future births. But it is no less true that it is not a sin to kill animals for the purpose of sacrifice. To kill them for such a purpose is *not* killing. Sacrifices are performed for the good of the world, and the Self-existent one created animals that they might be offered in sacrifice. The animals which are used in sacrifices attain hereafter rebirths in a higher order of existence. The privilege applies not only to animals but to herbs and trees as well. Manu declares says Bhṛgu, that when a man slaughters an animal for the entertainment of a guest, at sacrifices and at the rites in honour of the gods and his departed ancestors, both the man and the animal obtain a most honourable and blessed condition in the

next world.<sup>1</sup> The man who injures harmless creatures can never obtain happiness here or hereafter. It is not possible to obtain flesh without injuring creatures. Therefore it is impossible to obtain happiness here or hereafter if you eat flesh. A man should, therefore, abstain from the use of meat. But to injure harmless creatures in accordance with the rules laid down in the Veda is *not* injury. These rules, however, must be always observed. Among mortal men there is no sinner so great as he who eats flesh from the desire to make himself fat without regard to the sacred law. The person who permits an animal to be killed, the killer, the buyer of it, the seller of it, the cook and the eater are all equally guilty. The man who never eats flesh obtains as great a reward as the man who offers a horse sacrifice every year for a hundred years. It is not a sin to eat meat, to drink intoxicating liquor, to indulge in carnal intercourse, and to such enjoyments men are naturally prone. On the other hand, to abstain from these things acquires great rewards.

Impurity on account of a death lasts for ten days and affects all those in the Sapiṇḍa relationship. There are

**Ceremonial  
impurity**

shorter periods also prescribed, which depend on the status of the mourner or of the dead. The birth of a child also involves impurity, but it attaches to the parents alone, or even to the mother alone, except that it is necessary for the father to bathe. Those who have touched a corpse are purified after four days. When a child of less than two years dies, the body is not burned but buried, while no oblations are offered for a child that has not reached its third year. Should the teeth have appeared or the child have received a name, the parents may, if they so desire, make the water oblation. On the death of a girl who has been betrothed, the bridegroom and his relatives remain impure for three days. When the news of a kinsman's death comes after ten days have passed, the relatives must observe a period of three days' impurity. But should a year have passed, nothing more than bathing is required. When

<sup>1</sup> In view of the frequency with which guests were entertained and rites performed, it is manifest that a Brāhman had many opportunities of eating flesh. But note the change of view later on.

See Note B, The Cārvākas, p. 34.

a second death takes place within ten days after the first, a Brāhman does not require to observe a second period of impurity. For a learned Brāhman who lives with you out of friendship, for a pupil, for a maternal relative, for an officiating priest, two days and a night are sufficient. For a dear friend who is not a learned Brāhman, or for a teacher who knows the Veda and the Aṅgas, one day, and for a king half a day is enough. While the ordinary term of impurity for a Brāhman lasts for ten days, a Kṣatriya remains impure for twelve days, a Vaiśya for fifteen, and a Śūdra for a month. The rites connected with the sacred fires must not be interrupted during that time, for he who performs the fire-rite is not impure, even though he be a Sapiṇḍa relative of the deceased. The man who touches a Cāṇḍāla, an out-caste, a woman in her courses, a woman in child-bed, a dead body, or one who has touched a dead body, is rendered impure by so doing and must bathe. The Brāhman who touches a human bone must sip water and then touch a cow or look at the sun. No libation of water must ever be made to those who have neglected religious rites, to suicides, and to the off-spring of mixed marriages. Women also who have killed their husbands or procured abortion, who are lustful, who join heretical sects, must never be honoured with water oblations. A student who helps to carry to the burning-ground the dead body of his parents or teacher is not considered to have broken his vow. The body of a Śūdra must be carried out by the south gate of a town; the bodies of twice-born men by any of the other gates. Kings do not require to observe rites of purification. It is the duty of kings to be always busy protecting their subjects. Besides, a king is the incarnation of the eight guardian deities of the world, Indra, Kuvera, Varuṇa, Yama, the Sun and Moon, Wind and Fire; and it is these masters of the world who render men pure and impure. For those slain in battle there is no period of impurity. The slain man by his death has already performed a sufficient sacrifice. No Śūdra should be allowed to carry out a Brāhman's corpse, unless members of the dead man's caste cannot be secured. A Śūdra's touch interferes with the passage of the soul to heaven.

These are the things which purify: the knowledge of Brahma, austerities, fire, food, earth, self-control, water, cow-dung, the wind, sacred rites, the sun and time. The man who acquires wealth with clean hands has secured the best of all means for rendering himself pure. A readiness to forgive injuries purifies the learned man, and liberality him who has done what is forbidden. The muttering of sacred texts cleanses men from secret faults, and austerities purify those who are acquainted with the Veda. The body is cleansed with water, but the soul is cleansed by truth. For inanimate things, water, earth and kuśa grass are enough. Before wood can be thoroughly purified it must be planed. There are some materials which need to be scoured. Bones, shells and ivory require a mixture of the urine and dung of cows. An earthen vessel should be once more exposed to fire, but even that will not purify a vessel which has contained intoxicating liquor, blood or human excreta. To purify land, you must sprinkle it with the urine or milk of cows, smear it with cow-dung or keep cows in the place for a night and a day. If food has been sneezed on, defiled by hair or insects, touched with the foot, pecked at by birds, or smelt at by cows, it is rendered pure by scattering earth over it. The gods have said that a thing is pure if it is declared by a Brāhman to be pure. There are three things which are always pure, the hand of a workman engaged in his trade, goods exposed for sale in the market, and the food which a student obtains by begging. A woman's mouth, a bird when it causes fruit to fall by pecking at it, a dog when it catches a deer, a beast killed even by a Cāṇḍāla, and the cavities of the body above the middle are also to be reckoned as pure. Flies, drops of water, a shadow, a cow, dust, the rays of the sun, and a horse are also pure, even though they have touched an unclean thing. There are twelve impurities which flow from the body. To cleanse the organs from which they come and to remove their defilement, earth and water must be used, and the left hand only employed. If a man desires bodily purity, he should sip water three times and wipe his mouth twice. For a woman and a Śūdra, once is enough. A pious Śūdra must shave his head once a month. The rites of purification used by a



Vaiśya are open to him, and he is allowed to eat what remains over from the food of a twice-born man. The hair of the moustache, by getting into a man's mouth, and the food which clings to the teeth, do not render him impure. It is proper to sip water before beginning to study the Veda, and also after sleeping, sneezing, eating, spitting and telling a lie.

As to the duties of women, no woman, be she young or old, even one who is advanced in years, is permitted to do anything independently even in her own house. In

**Women** childhood she must be in subjection to her father, in youth to her husband, and when her husband dies to her sons. There is no time in her life when she can enjoy freedom and act on her own responsibility. Nor must she seek at any time to live separate from father, husband or sons. By so doing she brings the members of her family into contempt. Her business in life is to cultivate at all times a cheerful disposition, to be wise and diligent in the affairs of the household, exercising great frugality and keeping the cooking utensils clean. The man to whom her father gives her in marriage must be humbly obeyed while living, and held in honour when he is dead. He may be entirely devoid of every virtue, he may follow after other women, he may possess no good qualities; despite all that, a woman must worship her husband continually and look upon him as a god.<sup>1</sup> It is the husband to whom she has been wedded, by nuptial rites and texts from the Veda, who confers happiness on the wife, in this world and the next, at every time and in every place. No woman apart from her husband can take part in any rite or ceremony. She can make no vow and engage in no fast in which her husband does not share. By obeying her husband, and by that alone, is she raised to heaven. If a woman, therefore, desires to live with her husband in heaven, she must never do anything that will offend him, whether he be alive or dead. After he dies she must never so much as mention the name of another man. All her life long let her patiently endure hardships, avoid every kind of sensual pleasure, and faithfully obey all the rules of virtue that are appointed for wives devoted to their lords. A virtuous wife, who from the

<sup>1</sup> See Mahābhārata.

day of her husband's death devotes herself to chastity, shall join her husband in heaven, even though she has never given birth to a son to continue her husband's race. She will be on the same level with those virtuous Brāhmans who have practised life-long chastity, been the fathers of no sons and yet obtain a place in heaven.<sup>1</sup> The woman who, in her anxiety to obtain children, forgets the duty she owes to the dead and cohabits with another man, procures for herself disgrace in this world and will lose her place beside her lord in heaven. Children born to a man other than a woman's husband are in this place not considered legitimate;<sup>2</sup> children so born do not belong to the begetter. A virtuous woman is not allowed to marry a second time. When a virtuous wife dies it is her husband's duty, should they belong to the same caste, to cremate her body with the sacred fires used at the Agnihotra rite. For him it is lawful to marry another wife.

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<sup>1</sup> Refers to the belief that a man requires a son (*putra*) to rescue him from hell (*put*).

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. IX, p. 82 *et seq.* ; also Note E on Niyoga.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE HERMIT AND THE ASCETIC

HAVING fulfilled his duties as a householder, the Brāhman should now prepare to enter on the third stage of his existence,

and adopt the life of a hermit in the forest.

**The hermit**

He must not do so, however, till his hair has got white and grandsons have been born to him. Besides, a hermit's life demands steadfast resolve and firm self-control. When he goes to the forest he shall take nothing with him save the sacred fire and the instruments required for making the domestic sacrifices. His clothing should be made of skin or bark. His wife may go with him, but if he is so disposed he may commit her to the care of his sons. He must bathe either morning or evening, but never clip his hair or nails. The five great sacrifices<sup>1</sup> must be regularly performed, but with the food that is proper for ascetics to use, namely, herbs, roots and fruits. This same simple fare must be offered to all who seek his hospitality. He must study and recite the Veda, without flagging in his industry; he must never receive gifts, but himself always give what he can. Full of compassion and patience towards all living creatures, let him cheerfully endure the hardships to which he is exposed. When he has completed the observance of the sacrifices he is permitted to eat what is left over, but it is once more urged that the foods to be employed are herbs, roots and fruits. An ascetic must never eat the products of agriculture, nor taste honey, flesh and mushrooms. When the month of Aśvayuja, beginning in the middle of September, comes, he must throw away his worn-out clothes and the food lying in store, should he happen to have any. An ascetic is permitted to gather enough food to last for a day or a month or a year. His teeth should be his grinding-mill, or at best a stone. He may use a fire to cook his food; or he may eat what time alone has ripened. Nothing grown within a village is permitted at any time, however great the hunger of an

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Devotional acts towards the Veda, the gods, the manes, men, and all created beings. *Manu* 3.69-71.

ascetic may be. Once a day only may he eat, or, if he will, once in two days, or once in four, or once a fortnight. The lunar penance, too, is recommended (*cāndrāyana*), when a man daily increases his amount of food for fifteen days, and then daily decreases it with the waxing and waning of the moon.<sup>1</sup> As to the ascetic posture, he may roll about on the ground, stand on tiptoe, stand and sit alternately, in summer sit between the five fires, in the rains live exposed to the elements, in winter wear only wet clothes. In this way, ever increasing his austerities, let the hermit exhaust his body, without a dwelling or a fire, never speaking a word to anyone, eating what nature affords, sleeping on the ground and devoid of all affection. Such hardships the hermit must be willing to endure, if he would obtain union with the Supreme Soul, studying the sacred texts that are set forth in the Upaniṣads and other sacred books. It is also declared that a Brāhman, if he is fully determined, may go on walking in a north-easterly direction, living on water and air, walking till he drops.<sup>2</sup> In one of these ways it is possible for a Brāhman to be raised to the world of the Supreme Brahma, and to be for ever freed from all pain and sorrow.

On the assumption, presumably, that the hermit has not engaged in those supreme austerities which end in death,

**The ascetic** the narrator proceeds to describe the mode of life which must be followed by a Brāhman during the fourth and last stage of his earthly pilgrimage, when he is called an ascetic. It is said that the man who gets tired of giving alms and offering sacrifices, and becomes an ascetic, is

<sup>1</sup> In this penance, which is still practised in India, fifteen mouthfuls are eaten at full moon, and on the day of the new moon nothing is eaten at all.

<sup>2</sup> This is called 'The great departure' (*Mahāprasthāna*), a journey that ends in death. The religious books forbid suicide, but death by starvation was considered a meritorious end to the life of a hermit. Some commentators say that such an end is justifiable if a man is suffering from an incurable disease or has sustained a great sorrow. They also speak of death by drowning and fire as being practised. Bühler's *Manu*, p. 204. See also *Mahābhārata*, Book 15, for an account of hermitage life with a description of the self-immolation of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and Book 17 for an account of the great departure of the Pāṇḍus for heaven.



raised after death to the supreme happiness of heaven. It is to be noted, however, that he cannot enter this order until he has fulfilled the three obligations set forth as incumbent for every Brāhman: studied the Veda, become the father of a son, and offered sacrifices. Then only can he apply his thoughts to acquiring eternal bliss. Should he fail to pay these three debts, before seeking to obtain final liberation, he shall not only have no success in his attempt, but go downwards instead of upwards. Having fulfilled these obligations, however, the Brāhman is free to begin the life of an ascetic. Before setting out he must make a sacrifice to Prajāpati, part with all that he has, and place, as it were, in his mind the sacred fires. There is no danger from any source for the man who vows, as he sets forth, that he will cause no harm to any living creature. He must go forth alone and dwell alone, abandoning no one and abandoned by none, speaking to no one, with neither dwelling-place nor fire to cook his food or warm his body. His food he may obtain in any village he cares to go to, but always manifesting supreme indifference whether he gets food or not, his mind centred on the Supreme Brahma alone. With a broken earthen-pot for his begging-bowl and worn-out rags for his clothing, let him seek neither life nor death, waiting for the time to depart, as the hired servant waits for his wages. Let him look before he sets down his foot, that he may tread upon no insect nor upon anything that is impure. Let him patiently endure reproach and hard words, and abstain from harsh words in return. Let him give blessings for curses, and show no anger to an angry man. When he does speak his words must be true. Seated on the ground in the posture prescribed by the Yoga philosophy, finding his delight in meditating upon the Supreme Soul, let him keep himself from all desire save the desire to be set free for ever. He must not, for the sake of obtaining food, teach the sacred texts, explain prodigies and omens, give advice, show his skill in palmistry and the knowledge of the stars. He must not beg from any house where Brāhmans, hermits, dogs, birds or other mendicants dwell. He must keep his nails, hair and beard clipped. The ascetic who begs more than once a day, or shows himself anxious to obtain charity, makes it plain that he is still bound by the fetters of the

world. When the household fires have been extinguished, when even the leavings of the meal have been removed, then is the time for a true ascetic to go and beg. Should he get nothing he must not grieve. Should he get a little he must not rejoice. Nor must he take more than he requires. An ascetic has become ripe for immortality when he brings his senses under control, is devoid of both love and hatred, and injures no living creature.

It is because of their evil deeds that men are compelled to pass from body to body for ten thousand millions of lives,

**Transmigration** descend into hell and be exposed to torment in the land of Yama, the lord of death. It is because of their evil deeds that men have to endure old age, disease and death, and are forced to live with those they hate. Let the ascetic remember this truth, that the pains endured by mortal men come upon them for the evil that they have done, and that all the joys they achieve are theirs because of the religious merit that they have acquired. The Supreme Soul is present everywhere and in all things; both the highest and lowest organisms contain Him. The fruit of the Kataka tree is able to purify water, but to purify water it is not enough to merely mention the tree's name. The fruit must first be pounded and then cast into the water, before it can achieve any result. So also it is not enough for the ascetic to bear the mark or name of his order stamped upon his person. He must perform faithfully all the duties involved.

When walking, the ascetic must keep his eyes constantly fixed upon the ground, heedless of the inconvenience such an attitude may occasion, lest he should cause the death of an insect. Should he, however unwittingly, cause the death of any of these creatures, he must expiate his sin by six suppressions of the breath and by bathing. Even three suppressions of the breath,<sup>1</sup> if accompanied by the recitation of the sacred

<sup>1</sup> The first is an act of expiration, which is performed through the right nostril, while the left is closed with the fingers of the right hand. This is called *Recaka*. The thumb is then placed upon the right nostril, and the fingers raised from the left, through which breath is inhaled. This is called *Pūraka*. In the third act, both nostrils are closed and breathing is suspended; this is called *Kumbhaka*. A succession of these operations is called *Prāṇāyāma*. See Wilson's *Vishnu Purāṇa*, Book VI, Chap. 7, p. 231 and Monier Williams, *Brahmanism*, p. 402.

words *Bhūr, Bhuvah, Svar* and the sacred letters AUM, will be enough. Indeed, this is the highest of all austerities for the Brāhman.<sup>1</sup> The suppression of the breath cleanses a man of sinful acts, even as fire purges metal of its impurities. Sin itself is destroyed by fixed attention;<sup>2</sup> the desires of the flesh by restraint of the senses; and those qualities of the soul that are opposed to knowledge and virtue by meditation. A man can never escape from the weary circles of birth and death so long as he is held enchained by deeds. A man's body is like a house; his bones are the rafters and beams, his nerves and sinews are the cords and ropes which bind it together, his flesh and blood are the stones and mortar, his skin is the thatch. It is a dwelling-place, indeed, but one that is full of evil smells, foul with urine and ordure, infested by old age, disease and sorrow, racked by pain, haunted by passion, not built for many days. When a man departs from his body, torn like a tree from the river bank by the floods of fate, or rising like a bird of its own freewill from the branch on which it is sitting, he is to be reckoned fortunate, because he has escaped from the misery of this cruel devouring world (76-78). Let him bestow the guilt of his evil deeds upon his foes, and the merits of his good deeds upon his friends, and for himself seek for union with the Supreme Brahma by an increasing indifference to all the objects of life. And, so delivered from the bondage of opposites, honour and dishonour, hunger and satiety, joy and sorrow, he shall obtain salvation in this world as well as in the world to come. But let it not be forgotten that everything depends on meditation. The full reward that belongs to the due performance of rites cannot be secured if one does not achieve true knowledge of the Supreme Soul.<sup>3</sup> The ascetic should, therefore, continually repeat the texts of the Veda, which deal with sacrifices, those that have to do with the gods, and those which describe the Supreme Soul in the third and concluding

<sup>1</sup> See page 36.

<sup>2</sup> Fixed attention is, according to the Vedāntasāra, the fixing of the internal organ upon the secondless Reality. See Jacob's *Vedāntasāra*, p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> The subject of meditation, say the commentators, is the recognition of the unity of the individual soul with the Supreme Brahma. See Bühler's translation, pp. 211-13.



portion of the Veda.<sup>1</sup> In the Veda even those who are ignorant of its meaning, as well as those who know it, find refuge, and to it turn not only those who seek happiness in heaven, but those who desire the higher bliss that is without end.<sup>2</sup> When a twice-born man has duly performed all the acts that have been prescribed, and becomes an ascetic, he is able to get rid of sin and attain union with the Supreme Brahma.

Bhrgu then says that he has set forth what an ascetic ought to do, and will now declare what are the duties of those

**Praise of the  
householder**

who have ceased to follow the rites set forth in the Veda. There are four stages in a Brāhman's life—the student, the householder, the hermit, and the ascetic. By following out the rules attached to each of these four orders, or, indeed, any one of them, a Brāhman is able to reach a state of bliss in the world to come. Nevertheless, the greatest of the four is the life of the householder, and this is a truth taught by both Revelation and Tradition (Veda and Smṛti), because the householder is the support and stay of the other three. Just as all rivers seek the sea, so do men of the other orders find shelter with the householder. For all of them, however, there is a ten-fold system of duties, which must at all times be earnestly studied and obeyed. Contentment, forgiveness, patience under difficulties, refraining from illicit gain, conformity to the rules of purification, self-control, knowledge of the sacred texts, knowledge of the Supreme Soul, truthfulness and freedom from anger, these constitute the ten-fold law. The man who obeys these laws, has discharged his three debts,<sup>3</sup> and studied the Vedānta, may become an ascetic. But it is not necessary for him to give up

<sup>1</sup> The texts of the Vedās dealing with sacrifice are the Brāhmaṇās; those referring to the gods are the Mantrās, or Vedas proper; those dealing with the Soul are the Upaniṣads, called Vedānta, or 'end of the Veda.' So say the commentators.

<sup>2</sup> See the statement in the Mahābhārata, where a comparison is made between the joys of Indra's heaven and the beatitude of those who seek union with the Supreme Brahma. The joys of the former are said to be, after all, only a kind of hell. Indra's heaven was like the paradise of Mahomet, in that it provided for the satisfaction of sensual desires.

<sup>3</sup> See *Manu* 4.257. The three debts are due to the great sages, to the manes, and to the gods; i.e. a man must have studied the Veda, begotten a son, and performed the sacrifices.



the life of a householder. If he has subdued his organs, got rid of the guilt that adheres to sinful acts, given up the performance of Vedic rites and studied the Upaniṣads, he is permitted to dwell at home, under the care of his son. Final liberation is his one and only concern, and he achieves his purpose by freedom from desire and the power of renunciation.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DUTIES OF KINGS

KINGS were specially created that they might afford protection to the world. They are not ordinary beings. They

**The divinity  
of kings**

are composed of eternal particles drawn from the substance of Indra the king of heaven, Pavana the wind, Surya the sun, Candra the moon, Yama the god of death, Agni the god of fire, Varuṇa the atmosphere, and Kuvera the god of wealth. It is in virtue of this divine origin that a king is endowed with more than earthly glory. Without his protecting care the world would be overwhelmed in anarchy. He is a mighty god incarnate, and like the sun he burns the hearts and eyes of men. The fire of his wrath consumes them and all that they possess. The goddess of prosperity comes to those who gain his favour. Death is the portion of those with whom he is enraged. It is dangerous to shield those he dislikes or to oppose the will of his favourites. As a help to the king, Prajāpati, the lord of creatures, created Punishment, who is an incarnation of the law.

And from fear of punishment, all created things, moveable and  
**Punishment**      immoveable, yield obedience.<sup>1</sup> Punishment, then, rules over all things and watches all, even when men are asleep. Happiness flows from punishment justly administered, but when inflicted in an arbitrary manner it leads to destruction. If a king did not unceasingly punish the guilty, the strong would oppress the weak, dogs would lick the sacrificial butter, the lower castes would usurp the place of the higher; the sacred rites of property would disappear, caste would be destroyed by intermarriage; hopeless strife and confusion would ensue. Gods and demons alike are impelled by fear to grant the boons for which men crave.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Immoveable things, such as trees, allow themselves to be cut down for the use of men, say the commentators.

<sup>2</sup> The commentators quote a verse from the Yajur Veda: 'Through fear the fire warms, through fear the sun shines, through fear move Indra the wind and Death.' See Bühler's *Manu*, p. 219.

Punishment is dark of visage and has bloodshot eyes. When she goes forth among men, destroying the transgressor, the subjects of a king dwell in safety. In all he does, however, the king must act justly, paying due heed to the respective values of wealth, virtue and pleasure. Those kings who are voluptuous, unjust and deceitful, soon come to destruction, and punishment falls on him who should have wielded it, while the gods and sages, driven from a world which no longer can give them the offerings which are their due, take refuge in heaven. A king's task, then, is not an easy one. He must shun covetousness and sensual pleasures. He must seek the help of those who can guide him in the paths of wisdom. Let an upright king know that he who is just to his own subjects, severe with his foes, straightforward to his friends, and kind to Brāhmans, will acquire a glory that is worldwide.

We shall now set forth in detail the various duties incumbent on a king. First of all, he should get up early in the

**The duties of  
kings**

morning, give reverence to learned Brāhmans and act according to their advice. Aged Brāhmans, acquainted with the Veda in particular, should receive his daily worship. Even a man-eating Rākṣasa knows that he ought to pay respect to aged men. Such persons will teach him humility, and history shows that pride has caused the ruin of many kings, like Veṇa, Nahuṣa and many others. Humility, on the other hand, has raised hermits to the rank of kings. Prthu and Manu rose to be rulers of kingdoms; Kuvera became the god of wealth; and Viśvāmitra attained to the rank of a Brāhman, though he was born in the Kṣatriya caste. Learned Brāhmans, then, will teach a king how to rule, as well as impart the knowledge of the Supreme Soul. But from the common people he must also acquire a knowledge of agriculture, commerce and the various trades. No king who has not learned to subdue his senses can hope to secure the obedience of his subjects. There are ten vices which

**Eighteen vices** spring from love of pleasure, and eight whose root is wrath. The former will destroy both wealth and virtue. The latter will take away life itself. The ten vices are hunting, gambling, sleeping by day, gossip, sexual excess, drunkenness, an undue fondness for dancing, singing, and

music, and journeying about to no purpose. The eight vices linked to anger are, malice, violence, treachery, envy, slander, unjust seizure of property, abuse and assault (7.47-48). Wise men say that greed is the source and origin of both the ten and the eight vices, because a king is impelled by either greed of pleasure or greed to possess what others have. Of the ten vices that spring from pleasure, drinking, gambling, women and hunting are the worst. Of those that proceed from wrath, the doing of bodily injury, abuse and the unjust seizure of property are the worst. There are thus seven vices which are pre-eminently evil. They are to be found everywhere, and, beginning at the last named, form an ascending scale in wickedness. Vice is a greater evil than death. It casts a man into the lowest hell. Unaided by wise counsel, no king is able to

**Choice of  
ministers**

govern a great kingdom. He should, therefore, choose seven or eight ministers, the sons of men who have been in the royal service, of good birth, skilled in warfare, and well acquainted with the sacred books. He should consult with them daily, separately and collectively, on questions of peace and war, on revenue and government, and how to sanctify his gains by making gifts. But his chief counsellor should always be a learned Brāhman. To him all the affairs of State should be entrusted, and his advice should be the king's final guide. Ambassadors must be very carefully chosen, for on their wisdom depends the peace and amity of kingdoms. They should be men devoid of fear, skilful in speech, and quick to understand hints and gestures.

There next follows advice for a king who proposes to carve out for himself a new kingdom in a new country. He is

**Conquest**

advised to select a country with a dry climate, and not exposed to epidemic disease. The majority of the population should be Aryans. It is of the utmost importance to secure his newly-acquired territory by building a fortress, and if at all possible it should be built on a hill. One archer stationed behind a wall is more than equal to a hundred assailants. In the centre of his fortress the prince should build a handsome dwelling for himself, well supplied with water and trees, and take to himself a wife, pre-eminent in beauty, belong-



ing to his own rank and caste. Of equal importance is the choice of the family-priest, and those others whose duty it is to perform the rites and sacrifices. For the securing of religious merit, the prince must offer generous gifts to Brāhmans. There is no better way of adding to the royal store. So the holy books declare. He has secured a treasure which cannot be destroyed. Thieves cannot steal it, nor can his foes carry it away. To offer a gift to a Brāhman is always wise, but to give an offering to a Brāhman who knows the Veda and the Vedāngas is to achieve an endless reward. But it is to be noted that the quality of the reward depends on the faith of him who bestows. The Kṣatriya who dies fighting goes to heaven. It is wrong to slay a suppliant or one who is fighting with another. It is wrong to slay an enemy who has lost his armour, or who is asleep. It is wrong to slay a wounded man or a fugitive. It is wrong to use barbed or poisoned weapons. Every soldier is entitled to keep what he has gained by his own hand. The booty in general should be divided by the king among the troops.

It is said that there is a fourfold rule by the observance of which a king secures happiness. What he has not, let him seek to acquire ; what he has acquired, let him preserve ; what he has preserved, let him increase ; and what he has increased, let him give to those who are worthy. A king should always be on his guard, watching the treachery of his foes, but he himself should avoid both guile and treachery. Let him learn the weakness of those opposed to him, while he conceals his own weakness like the tortoise which hides its fragile limbs beneath its shell. He should imitate the heron, which stands on the river bank, plunged as it were in thought, but watching all the time for the approach of fish. He should be like the lion, which smites with all its strength ; like the wolf, when it darts upon its prey ; like the hare, skilful in retreat. In the government of his kingdom, a prince should place officers in charge of every ten villages. These should report to a higher official who is responsible for twenty ; the ruler of twenty to the ruler of a hundred ; and the latter, to him who rules a thousand. One of the king's ministers will inspect the administration of

**Gifts to  
Brahmans**

**Advice for  
kings**

all these village officials, not only personally but by means of spies. Unless this is done evils are sure to arise, for as a rule government officials are guilty of oppression and take possession of the property of those they govern. When their crime is discovered, the king should send such persons into banishment, after confiscating all that they possess. The wages of the lowest class of servant should be fixed at one *pana* per day, that of the highest at six *panas*. In addition they should all receive clothing twice a year and a *drona* of grain once a month.

With reference to taxation, we are told that the leech, the bee and the calf take their food, not all at once but gradually,

**Taxation** and a king should imitate their example. He is entitled to a sixth or a twelfth part of the

crops; to a sixth part of trees, meat, honey, butter, fruits, skins, and so on. Traders also should be made to pay duties on the goods they sell, after the cost of transport and the rates of purchase and sale have been taken into consideration. The common people also should make a contribution. Artisans and Śūdras should give one day's labour in the month to the king. But there is one person who must never, in any circumstances, be taxed, and that is the Brāhman learned in the Veda. Even though he were dying of hunger, it would be wrong for a king to make any requisition from such a Brāhman. The country in which a learned Brāhman suffers from hunger will soon suffer from famine. It is a king's business to see to it that all learned Brāhmans live in comfort, protected and cared for, as if they were the king's own sons. The Brāhman's blessing will confer length of days, wealth and glory.

To prevent people from becoming acquainted with his plans, a king should take counsel with his ministers in some lonely place, on a hill side, or in the depths of a forest. He must be on his guard against women, foreigners, idiots, blind, deaf and dumb people. Women, in particular, are very prone to betray secrets. The matters to be so carefully discussed are the general administration of his government, the behaviour of the women in his zenana, and the trustworthiness of his spies. It is chiefly, however, the making of peace and war that concerns the author, and he sets forth four expedients—

force, conciliation, bravery, and policy. A king should resolve on war when he knows that his army is in good condition and

**Peace and war** his people enthusiastic, while the enemy, on the other hand, is disheartened. When he

has reason to believe that by delay he will better his prospects, he should strive to make a temporary peace. The bravest soldiers are to be found in Kurukṣetra (near Delhi), the land of Matsya (to the north of Jaipur), and the people of Kanauj and Mathura. No man can say what has been appointed to happen in this world, but it lies with every man to do the best he can. Fate and human effort are the two forces that govern the lives of men. When victory has been achieved, a king should worship the gods and pay respect to Brāhmans. It is necessary to exercise the greatest care in the preparation of food for the royal table. It should always be examined, and sacred texts, that annul the effects of poison, muttered over it. Antidotes which destroy poison should be mixed with the food. There are gems also, which, if worn on the person, have a similar effect. The women who attend the king should have their clothes and ornaments carefully seen to. In the intervals of his labours, a king may enjoy himself with his women. It is only when he is attacked by illness that a king is entitled to entrust the affairs of government to his ministers.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF LAW

IN the administration of both civil and criminal law, the king should either act in person, or appoint a Brāhman as his deputy. Three assessors, also of the Brāhmanical caste, should be associated with him in this work. Such a court is called the court of the four-faced Brahmā. Even an unlettered Brāhman may be employed by the king to assist him in his legal work, but never a Śūdra by any chance whatever. There are, in all, eighteen subdivisions under which cases may be tried. These deal with the recovery of debt, sale and purchase, breach of agreements, non-payment of wages, boundary disputes, adultery, theft, assault, defamation, the duties of husband and wife, questions affecting wardship and inheritance, etc. Great emphasis is laid on the need of wisdom and impartiality on the part of a judge, and he is bidden address all the parties to a case in a kindly manner. The guilt of a wrong decision falls in equal parts on the king, his judge, the man who wins the suit and his witnesses. Witnesses must tell the whole truth. Suppression of the truth and false witness are equally evil. Like ambassadors, judges should be able to infer a great deal from the looks and gestures of those giving evidence. Members of the four castes are competent as witnesses, but they must be natives of the country and possess male heirs. The following persons, however, are debarred: those who have on a previous occasion been found guilty of perjury, the enemy or the particular friend of a party to the suit, mechanics, actors, those suffering from disease, kings, ascetics, learned Brāhman, students of the Veda, those who are engaged in occupations forbidden by their caste; aged people, infants, people of the lowest castes (probably this refers to those outside the pale of Hinduism), slaves, hired servants, intoxicated and covetous persons, madmen, an angry man, a thief, and those exhausted by toil, hunger, or thirst. Twice-born men should give evidence for twice-born men, and Śūdras of good

Witnesses  
eligible



character on behalf of Śūdras. In the same way, women can only tender evidence on behalf of women. Presumably these limitations only apply to civil cases, for it is added that those who have themselves witnessed the commission of an evil deed shall give evidence, and they may be of any caste. When there are no legitimate witnesses, the evidence of children, old men, slaves, relatives, women and hired servants is admissible. The objection to women is that they are feeble-minded. In criminal cases, a judge should not be too critical of the character and standing of the witnesses. False witness is a very grievous sin. It plunges a man into hell and he remains bound in the fetters of Varuṇa during one hundred transmigrations.<sup>1</sup> 'The Soul itself is its own witness; the Soul itself is its own refuge. Offend not the conscious soul, the supreme internal witness of men. The sinful have said in their hearts, "None sees us." But the gods distinctly see them, and so does the spirit within their breasts' (8.84-85).

When the judge is about to hear evidence, he shall call upon members of the first three castes to declare the truth, standing towards the north or the east, and in the presence of images of the gods and Brāhmanas. When addressing a Brāhman, it is enough to say, 'Speak.' But to the Kṣatriya, he will say, 'Speak the truth'; while he will warn the Vaiśya by dwelling on the guilt of stealing cattle, grain or gold, or he may warn him of the danger of losing those objects which are dear to him, should he be guilty of perjury. Before receiving the evidence of a Śūdra the judge must speak as follows: 'Whatever places of torment are assigned by the sages to the slayer of a Brāhman, to the murderer of women and children, to him who betrays a friend, and to an ungrateful man, these shall be thy portion if thou speakest falsely. The reward of all thy meritorious deeds, which thou, good man, hast done since thy birth, shall become the share of dogs, if in thy speech thou depart from the truth. . . . If thou art not at variance with the divine Yama who dwells in thy heart, thou needest neither visit the Ganges nor the land of the Kurus. Naked and shorn, tormented with hunger and thirst and deprived of sight, shall

<sup>1</sup> The fetters of Varuṇa are said to be dropsy, which will afflict a man for a hundred lives.

the man, who gives false evidence, go with a potsherd to beg food at the door of his enemy. Headlong, in utter darkness, shall the sinful man tumble into hell who . . . answers one question falsely.' It is added that false evidence concerning small animals causes the death of five relatives of the perjured person; false evidence concerning cattle kills ten; false evidence about horses kills one hundred; false evidence about men kills one thousand; false evidence about land kills even more. Actors, usurers, Brāhmans employed in trade and industry, and hired servants, are to be treated and addressed as above, as if they were Śūdras. The very next verse, however, is to the following effect: 'In some cases a man, who, though knowing the facts to be different, gives false evidence from a pious motive, does not lose heaven; such evidence they call the speech of the gods. Whenever the death of a Śūdra, of a Vaiśya, of a Kṣatriya, or of a Brāhman would be caused by a declaration of the truth, a falsehood may be spoken, for such falsehood is preferable to the truth' (8.103-104). The guilt of such a falsehood may be removed by making an offering of boiled rice to Sarasvati, the goddess of speech. Two other verses, succeeding one another in the same chapter, read as follows: 'Let no wise man swear an oath falsely, even in a trifling matter; for he who swears an oath falsely is lost in this world and after death. No crime causing loss of caste is committed by swearing falsely to women, the object of ones desire, at marriages, for the sake of fodder for a cow, or of fuel, and in order to show favour to a Brāhman'<sup>1</sup> (8.112). In addition to putting witnesses and accused persons on oath, a king may appoint trial by ordeal. They may be compelled to carry fire, to dive into water, to touch the heads of their wives and children. If fire does not burn them, nor water drown them; if no calamity befalls their wives and children, they must be considered free from guilt. For giving false evidence, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras should be fined and banished. As to Brāhmans, fines are impossible, but they must leave the country.

The property of minors must be carefully guarded, as well as that of widows and invalid women. The relative who

<sup>1</sup> Commentators call attention to the fact that Indra swore such a false oath when accused of his intrigue with Ahalyā, the wife of Gautama.

appropriates such property should be punished as a thief. When the owner of property disappears, the king may take possession of it at the end of three years. If a claimant to

**Laws of property**

lost property cannot describe it accurately, he must pay a fine equal to the value of the goods he falsely claimed. A king is entitled to one-sixth of all lost property recovered. A Brāhman who finds hidden treasure shall keep the whole of it. Other castes must pay one-sixth or one-twelfth to the king. Another verse says he is entitled, as lord of the soil, to one half of all such treasure. A creditor is entitled to recover his debts by every means in his power, even by the use of force. In specifying the methods he may employ, the phrase 'by the customary proceeding' is used, which commentators explain to mean 'by killing one's wife, children and cattle, and sitting at the debtor's door,' till the money is paid; or 'by the creditor starving himself to death'<sup>1</sup> (8.49). A creditor loses his case, if he is confused in his statements, shifts his ground, and does not produce the witnesses he promised to produce. A defendant must plead within six weeks, or the case will be decided against him. As to interest, we are told that the legal interest is 15 per cent. per annum. The next

**Rate of interest**

verse, however, gives a much higher rate of interest; on 'unsecured loans,' according to the commentators, these rates are 24 per cent. to Brāhman borrowers, 36 per cent. to Kṣatriyas, 48 per cent. to Vaiśyas, and 60 per cent. per annum to Śūdras. Another verse indicates that the highest rate of interest may be taken from all the castes. Interest beyond this rate is illegal, and cannot be recovered by a legal process. It is called usury. Interest in money paid at any one time must never be more than equal to the principal, while payments in grain should not be more than five times the principal. It is added that a creditor may not take money interest beyond the year, which is variously interpreted to mean that, if the creditor does not take the money due for two or three years and the debtor offers to pay then, the

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This is the practice of Dharnā. It is forbidden by the Indian Penal Code. For interesting accounts of how it was employed in recent times, see Broughton's *Letters from a Mahratta Camp*, p. 31, and Mrs. Fay's *Letters from India*, No. XX.



creditor shall not take interest for more than one year, or the payment then made must not be more than double the original sum due. On the other hand, it is said that if the debtor cannot pay at the time fixed, a new contract may be made, and the original principle, plus the interest due, inserted in the new bond.<sup>1</sup> If a borrower gives, as a pledge to his creditor, land, cattle or slaves, which may be used to profit, no interest requires to be paid on the loan. No pledge thus given can be permanently alienated. A merchant trading by sea must pay any rate of interest that is fixed by those competent to judge.

Lengthy regulations are given with regard to the boundaries of fields and villages, and the damages that may be claimed for injury done by cattle. A field

**Boundaries** should have a hedge so high that a camel cannot look over it, and every gap through which a dog or boar could come must be stopped. No compensation needs to be paid for damage done by cows ten days after calving, or by bulls and other animals sacred to the gods. Every village and town should have a pasture ground open to the inhabitants. Herdsmen who are paid in milk are entitled to milk the best cow out of ten. Witnesses in regard to boundaries between fields and villages shall record in writing what the boundaries are. They must, at the time of their decision, wear chaplets of red flowers, and red dresses.

In cases of defamation, a Kṣatriya will pay 100 *panas* for defaming a Brāhman. For defaming a Kṣatriya, a Brāhman should pay half that sum; while for defaming a

**Punishments for Sudras and others** Śūdra, a Brāhman will pay twelve *panas*. If a twice-born man defames a member of his own caste, he also should be fined twelve *panas*. But should a Śūdra grossly abuse a Brāhman, his tongue is to be cut out. For contemptuous reference to the names and castes of the twice-born, an iron nail, ten fingers long, should be thrust into his mouth. Should he have the audacity to give advice to a Brāhman, hot oil should be poured into his ears and mouth. With whatever limb a Śūdra injures a twice-born

<sup>1</sup> See Note in Bühler's *Manu*, p. 280.



man, of that limb he should be deprived. That is, if he raises his hand against him, his hand; if he kicks him, his foot. If he spits on him, his lips should be cut off. Even to sit on the seat of a high caste man draws the punishment of branding on the hip and banishment.<sup>1</sup> To draw the blood of an equal involves a fine of 100 *panas*, but to break a bone means banishment. The assailant must also pay for the medical treatment of his victim. A man is entitled to chastise his wife, his son, his younger brother, his pupil and his slave, but on the back part of the body only. To beat them elsewhere is a great insult. A rope or a cane are the instruments allowed (8.299). As to the crime of theft, corporal punishment is prescribed for goods beyond a certain value, while fines are levied sometimes to twice, sometimes to ten times the value of the stolen article. Mutilation is also prescribed. To steal cows belonging to Brāhmans means the loss of a foot. The theft of women and precious stones is punishable with death. It is said that if a king should be guilty of theft, he should be fined one thousand times as much as a common man, while a Brāhman is eight times more culpable than a Śūdra, because he better understands the greatness of his wrong doing. In self-defence, in a quarrel about the fees that ought to be paid to Brāhmans, to protect women and Brāhmans, it is not a sin to kill a man.

Adultery is a grievous crime. It leads to the mixture of castes and destroys the foundations on which society rests.<sup>2</sup>

**Adultery** Even speaking to the wife of another man is considered an adulterous act, and is punishable with a fine. The crime of adultery must be punished with death, except in the case of a Brāhman. Beggars, artisans, bards, those initiated in the ceremony of the Vedic sacrifice, are allowed to speak to women. Anyone may speak to the wives of actors and singers, or in cases where a husband connives at his wife's evil deeds. A man guilty of rape against a virgin shall be mutilated. For unnatural vice, a woman's head should be shaved and she be driven through the town seated on an ass.

<sup>1</sup> There are other punishments which are better inferred than expressed.

<sup>2</sup> If castes are mixed, sacrifices cannot be properly offered, and if sacrifices are not properly offered rain will not fall, say the commentators.

For a wife of good family guilty of unfaithfulness, the punishment is that she be eaten by dogs in a public place. Her paramour should be burnt to death on a red-hot iron bed. There are other verses which would indicate that only in the case of Śūdras committing adultery with a Brāhman woman, or, it may be, other twice-born women, is death to be inflicted. We are told, for instance, that on a second conviction the fine is to be doubled. It is also stated that a Śūdra for committing adultery with a twice-born woman will be mutilated in the offending part and lose all his property, if the woman was not properly guarded. If properly guarded he must pay the death penalty. Further, it is said that Vaiśyas and Kṣatriyas guilty of this crime against a Brāhman woman are to be fined only, with the proviso that, should the woman be the properly guarded wife of a distinguished Brāhman, the guilty man should be punished as if he were a Śūdra. Brāhmans are to be fined for the same offence, but it is added that in lieu of capital punishment, which is the lot of other castes, a Brāhman should be further punished by having his hair cut. Though a Brāhman may have committed every possible sort of crime, he must never be put to death. Touch not his sacred person, deprive him not of his private property. Banish him, if you will. But to kill a Brāhman, even to conceive the thought of doing so, is the greatest of all sins.

The king in whose country there lives no thief, no adulterer, no one guilty of defamation, assault or violence, attains the mansions of the god Indra. A king should be very cautious about interfering in disputes between caste-fellows as to the duties of their order. A mother, a father, a wife and a son should never be deserted or cast off, unless they have broken their caste. A Brāhman who does not invite his neighbours to his feast should be fined. Blind men, idiots, cripples, old men of seventy years, and the benefactors of Brāhmans learned in the Veda, should not be taxed. A washerman should always wash clothes gently and on a board made of the wood of the cotton-tree. He should not return the wrong clothes, nor allow anybody else to wear them. Market prices should be fixed once a week or once a fortnight. Weights and measures

**Miscellaneous  
rules**

should be examined once in six months. The man who tries to cheat the revenue should be compelled to pay eight times the original duty. Pregnant women, learned Brāhmans, ascetics and hermits do not need to pay toll at a ferry. For sea voyages there are no fixed rates, but the king should appoint the fares to be paid on boats that ply for hire on rivers. Vaiśyas and Śūdras must perform the duties assigned to their castes. If they did not the whole social order would be cast into confusion. A Vaiśya's duty is to buy and sell, cultivate the land and keep cattle. A Śūdra is the servant of the other castes. The Self-existent One created him to be the slave of the Brāhman. Even though his master sets him free, he is still a slave, a slave by nature and by birth.

## CHAPTER IX

### RULES RELATING TO HUSBANDS AND WIVES

A WOMAN at no time in her life is fit for independence. She ought to be under the protection of her father in childhood, of her husband in youth, and of her sons in old age. Night and day she must be watched. On the other hand, it is a father's duty to see to it that his daughter is married at the proper age, and the husband's duty to grant his wife her conjugal rights. If this is not done, and evil desires not warded off, grief and dishonour are sure to follow. The man who does not guard the purity of his wife is indifferent to the welfare of his ancestors, because it is only legitimate sons who can take part in the funeral ceremonies, and thereby acquire religious merit. It is not by watch and ward only that a man can expect to keep his wife from evil doing. His best plan is to keep her busy in preparing food and all the various duties of the household. Yet even better than that is the restraint which a woman exercises over herself. The chief causes of a woman's downfall are evil companions, the practice of going to other people's houses, sleeping in the day time, drinking, and the absence of her husband from home. It is well known that women are naturally prone to do evil. They are devoid of all real affection, fickle in temper, and very fond of sexual intercourse. They do not ask whether a man is old or young, ugly or beautiful. All they care for is to get possession of a man. Manu has said that evil appetites, anger, deceit, love of dress and love of ease and sleep, are the appointed lot of womankind, and, indeed, the Creator of the Universe ordained that this should be so, when He first created them. They have no right to share in any Vedic rites. They are ignorant of the sacred books. They have neither intelligence nor bodily vigour. 'They are as impure as falsehood itself.' There are many verses in the Vedas which plainly reveal the true nature of women. On the other hand, it is said that a woman soon achieves those virtues with which her husband is



endowed, just as a river quickly acquires the saltness of the sea into which it flows, while praise is awarded to certain women of the lowest caste, who married great and holy rishis like Vasiṣṭha, and in the end obtained worldly fame, by sharing in their virtues. Women, therefore, are worthy of honour. A wife who gives birth to children secures for her husband and his ancestors the bliss of heaven.<sup>1</sup> A true wife fills the home with light and gladness. She is, indeed, the very goddess of prosperity herself. While after death the faithful wife who has controlled her thoughts, words and deeds, shall mount to heaven to dwell there with her husband. But for an evil wife the fates ordain that she be reborn into this world as a jackal, the victim of horrible diseases, which will come upon her as punishment for her sins.

The Law-Book now discusses a question on which it says that the sacred books of revelation give contradictory teaching.

**Niyoga**

It is illustrated by a parable, to the effect that if a man chooses to sow his seed in a field belonging to another man, the harvest belongs not to the sower but to the owner of the field. There are, too, different kinds of seed, barley, wheat, beans and sugar-cane, and it is the seed not the field that makes the difference in the crop that is gathered. Following from this parable, we are told that woman is the field, while man is the sower of the seed. And no one who is acquainted with the Veda and the Vedāṅgas must ever cohabit with another man's wife. Husband and wife are to be reckoned as one, and there is no law which sanctions their separation. Indeed, the perfect man is said to be found in the union of husband, wife and son. Having enunciated these sentiments, Manu follows up his parable by saying that the child born to a woman by means of some person, other than her husband, belongs to the husband, who is the owner and lord of the field. It does happen sometimes that a special arrangement is made as to sowing a field, when the sower of the seed and the owner of the field agree to share the harvest. And a similar arrangement can be made to hold

<sup>1</sup> Without a son to perform the necessary funeral rites a man cannot enter heaven. A son is called *Putra* because he rescues his ancestors from *Put* or hell.

with regard to sheep, cattle, slave-girls and other animals. This statement leads to the observation that a man must have no sexual connection with his brother's wife, even though his doing so has been sanctioned, except in the event of the woman having no son. In such special circumstances a woman may be approached by her brother-in-law, or other person within the Sapiṇḍa relationship. But such a person may beget only one son and no more, though some sages hold that a second son may also be begotten. This is the practice of Niyoga<sup>1</sup> (9.60-64). In this union neither of the parties must be influenced by evil motives. And when they have attained their purpose and raised up a son, they must act towards one another like a father and daughter. But the next five verses return to the earlier teaching, and it is clearly asserted that a widow belonging to the first three castes must never, in any circumstances, associate with another man. Such criminal intercourse is a bestial practice, worthy of beasts, and was first introduced by the wicked king Vena. He was a great sage, but his evil passions destroyed his understanding, and ever since his time men of honour have denounced as sinful the arrangement that a widow should be approached by another man with a view to obtaining children. The younger brother should look upon his brother's wife with the reverence that he would pay to the wife of his religious teacher, while the elder brother should esteem his brother's wife as his daughter-in-law. There is one exception to this. If a man dies after betrothal, but before marriage has been consummated, his brother may marry the girl, but only with a view to raise up children. Marriage engagements, once entered upon, cannot be annulled. But should a girl's parents have been guilty of deception by concealing the fact that she is diseased or in any other way blemished, the man is entitled to cancel the marriage. When a man travels abroad he must make proper provision for his wife, and the woman must wait faithfully and patiently till he returns. Should he have gone

<sup>1</sup> See note regarding the practice of Niyoga. Compare Rg Veda X, 40.2. 'Who brings you (Asvins) homeward, as the widow bedward draws her husband's brother, as the bride attracts the groom' (Griffith's translation). *Manu*, 9.190, sanctions the calling in of a member of the same sub-caste or gotra. Niyoga means 'fastening' or 'attaching to'.

in search of wisdom or for some object connected with religion, she must wait for six or eight years. Should he have left her, in pursuit of his own pleasures, and in this commentators include pleasures connected with other women, the wife does not need to wait for more than three years. As to the meaning of the statement about waiting, some interpret it as giving the wife the right to marry again should her husband fail to return, others hold that what is intended is that she go in search of her spouse.<sup>1</sup> Even though a husband is drunken, a gambler, and diseased, his wife must always treat him with respect. A woman guilty of showing disrespect should be deprived of all her ornaments and of her husband's society for three months. But in the event of a husband being insane or impotent, a eunuch, or suffering from a disease which is the fruit of sin, a woman ought not to be punished for manifesting what she feels. Men have greater privileges. They are entitled to displace one wife by another at any time they like, should they be disobedient, diseased, extravagant or drunken. But a man must wait for eight years before he supersedes a barren wife. He is, however, entitled to turn off a quarrelsome woman without delay. If a wife is affectionate and virtuous, her husband cannot displace her except with her consent, and then only with honour.

With regard to wives who are members of different castes, it is only the wife of the same caste as her husband who assists in the domestic rites. The man who employs a wife of another caste in these duties is as bad as a Cāṇḍāla.<sup>2</sup> A father may give his daughter in marriage, even before she has reached the proper age,<sup>3</sup> if the bridegroom is good looking and worthy. But better never to marry your daughter at all than give her to a bad man. Should three years have passed beyond the marriageable age, and a maiden find that no arrange-

<sup>1</sup> The Ṛsis, Nārada and Parāśara, approved of re-marriage. See Bühler's Note, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> It was not legal for a man to marry a woman of a higher caste than his own.

<sup>3</sup> Some commentators say that the proper age is 'eight years.' One protests against greedy fathers giving away infants in marriage for the sake of money. Bühler, p. 343.



ment has been made for her, she is entitled to choose a husband for herself. On the other hand, she may not take with her any ornaments, while her husband does not require to pay to his father-in-law the usual marriage-fee, inasmuch as the girl's father did wrong in delaying her marriage. A man of thirty should marry a girl of twelve, a man of twenty-four a girl of eight years. Marriage is ordained by the gods, and a wife is their gift. A faithful wife must always receive due support. Men and women were created that they might be the parents of children, and in the religious rites which the husband performs he must be assisted by his wife. If a man dies after payment of the nuptial-fee, his younger brother should marry the girl if she is agreeable. The next verse states, even a Śūdra should not charge a nuptial-fee, for he who does so has been guilty of selling his daughter. It will be remembered that Chapter III also very explicitly forbids the practice, while Chapter VIII recognises that it is the rule to fix a price.<sup>1</sup> In this place, at any rate, Manu declares that in former creations such a base practice as selling a daughter in marriage was never heard of, and ends on the lofty note that husband and wife, eagerly desirous of married bliss, should strive to be faithful one to the other, until death shall separate them.

On the death of their father, brothers are entitled to divide equally the property which comes to them from their father and mother, or, if they agree to continue to live together in patriarchal fashion, the eldest may assume control of everything. The first-born occupies a peculiarly honourable position, and if he truly fulfils his duties, the younger brothers should pay him the same respect as they formerly gave to their father. There is, however, much spiritual merit to be acquired by the brothers resolving to set up separate establishments. For in that case they will each have to erect a family hearth, at which they will kindle the sacred fire and as heads of households perform the five great sacrifices. We are, therefore, told that in such an event,

<sup>1</sup> Bühler remarks that such a rule proves that, in spite of all directions to the contrary, wives were purchased in ancient India. But when Manu both recognises and condemns the practice it is not to be wondered at that confusion prevailed.



the division of property will not be made into equal parts, but that the eldest brother will get two shares as against one each for the other brothers. Brothers should also give one-fourth of their shares to their sister or sisters.<sup>1</sup> When a man has no son, he can appoint his daughter's son to perform the funeral rites. In support of this practice, Dakṣa is given as an illustration.<sup>2</sup> He had no less than fifty daughters, married in varying proportions to Dharma, the god of Justice, the Ṛṣhi Kaśyapa and Soma, the moon god, and he arranged in connection with every one of them that his daughters' sons should fulfil the duties that devolve on a real son. And such an one is indeed a real son. He is entitled to the whole estate of his maternal grandfather. Should a man have a son born to him after making this arrangement regarding his grandson, son and grandson shall inherit equally. The birth of a son is a matter of the very highest importance. By the birth of a son a father achieves the ten worlds free from sorrow; a grandson secures for him immortal life; a great-grandson a place in the sun. A son delivers (*trāyate*) his father from the hell called *Put*, and for that reason the Self-existent, Svayambhū, has called him *Putra* (9.138). The rules of inheritance set forth as above only apply to brothers born of women belonging to the same caste. When, however, a Brāhman has wives drawn from the four castes, the son of his Brāhman wife is entitled, before any division of property is made, to appropriate one share to himself, as also the house and ornaments, the household slave, the family chariot or cart, and the bull. Thereafter the division of what is left may be made, when the son of the Brāhman gets three shares, as against two shares to the son of the Kṣatriya, one and a half shares to the son of the Vaiśya, and one share to the son of the Śūdra woman. As an alternative the whole property should be divided into ten parts, four parts to the Brāhman woman's son, and three parts, two parts and one part

<sup>1</sup> It is said that when there are children of wives belonging to different castes, brothers are only responsible for those born to the same mother.

<sup>2</sup> Dakṣa was son of the god Brahmā, and was one of the Prajāpatīs or Lords of Creatures. The Rg Veda says Dakṣa sprang from Aditi, and Aditi from Dakṣa. It will be remembered that Prajāpati is also used in the singular, when it is equivalent to the Creator.

be given to the three other sons respectively. The rule of giving one-tenth only to a Śūdra wife's son must never be exceeded, even though his father be otherwise childless. Indeed, the next verse contradicts what has been said above, and says that the son of a Śūdra wife has no claim to his father's property. Everything depends on his father's pleasure.<sup>1</sup> When a man has arranged, in accordance with the Niyoga ceremony, to have a son begotten on a wife by her brother-in-law, and afterwards begets a son of his own, then the former is only entitled to receive one-fifth or one-sixth of the estate. When a Brāhman dies and leaves no heirs, his property goes to his fellow Brāhman. In the case of other castes, the property goes to the king.

Gambling and betting are not to be distinguished from theft. They are evils which have destroyed both princes and kingdoms, and should not be tolerated by any ruler. **Gambling and betting** Great harm was caused by these vices in one of the former creations, and no man who is wise will take part in them, even as an amusement. Every one who does so should suffer corporal punishment, either by flogging or mutilation. They should receive the same punishment as those Śūdras receive who try to pass themselves off as members of the three higher castes. Gamblers rank with heretics, dancers, singers, and sellers of liquor. Every one of them should be banished. So, too, with wicked people and those who engage in occupations not sanctioned by their caste.

There are four sins which are described as mortal sins: **Mortal sins** killing a Brāhman, drinking the liquor called Surā, stealing the gold of a Brāhman, and improper conduct with the wife of one's religious teacher. Those guilty of such crimes should be fined and receive corporal punishment.<sup>2</sup> Appropriate marks should be stamped on the person of the transgressor. For drinking liquor, the figure of a wine cup; and for stealing a Brāhman's

<sup>1</sup> Manu here inserts the warning that a Śūdra cannot marry a woman of a higher caste.

<sup>2</sup> It will be noted that in a succeeding verse the death penalty is reasonably assigned to the murderer of a Brāhman. See also succeeding chapters with regard to mortal sins.

gold, a dog's foot. Thereafter, they should be driven from house and home, excluded from all religious ceremonies, refused all hope of marriage, made outcasts and wanderers. It is added, however, that the guilty persons may escape branding if they undergo a penance, which is not described. It is very wrong for a king to keep the property of a man who has been guilty of a mortal sin. He should make it an offering to the god Varuṇa, by throwing it into the water. There is no harm, however, in presenting the fine to a learned Brāhman of good conduct. Varuṇa is entitled to receive it, because he is the supreme ruler over kings, but a Brāhman who knows the Veda is greater still. He is lord over all the earth. Great blessings come to the land where a king does not appropriate the belongings of those who have been guilty of mortal sins. Their children do not die and men live till they are old. The harvests are both sure and plentiful.

The king should punish the following persons with death. Those who kill women, children and Brāhmanas, those who corrupt the king's ministers or help the king's enemies, and those who forge royal edicts. The

**Miscellaneous  
rules**

Śūdra who causes pain to a Brāhman should receive such chastisement as will fill men with terror. It is as wrong to punish an innocent man as to set free one who is guilty. Kings are once more admonished to give strict attention to their duties, and told that if they do not uproot the thorns which give pain to the body politic, they cannot hope to attain heaven. They are bidden to make great use of spies in discovering thieves and other rogues, who thus afflict their kingdoms. An interesting list of these rogues is given. It includes receivers of bribes, gamblers, extortioners, debasers of metals, fortune-tellers, fraudulent shopkeepers, reciters of auspicious hymns, harlots, men who pretend to belong to another caste than their own, and 'artists.'<sup>1</sup> With a view to the discovery and arrest of criminals, spies should be employed to persuade and incite them to one of their criminal acts, and then to have them seized red-handed and duly punished.

<sup>1</sup> Artists are said to include persons who adorn people, such as hairdressers, umbrella and fan makers, or those who cut figures out of chips of cane and the like.



Reformed criminals are also very useful. They are acquainted with the methods and haunts of their old associates. By pretending to offer them extra good food, or to arrange the honour of an interview with some Brāhman, spies should bring them within the clutches of the officers of the law. If these methods fail, the only alternative is to attack the rascals with an armed force and destroy them root and branch. A thief should not be killed unless he is found with stolen goods in his possession. Aiders and abettors of thieves are equally guilty. If a provincial governor and his subordinates are not active in suppressing thieves and robbers, they are to be reckoned as partakers in their evil deeds. When robbers attack a village or commit some other such crime, villagers and all others who do not hasten to the help of the authorities must be punished with banishment. Those who rob the royal treasury or a temple, who steal horses, elephants and chariots, must be punished with death. An ordinary thief should lose two fingers for his first offence; a hand and foot for his second; for the third, death is the penalty. The man who destroys the bank of a reservoir should be drowned. Physicians who injure the health of their patients, be they animals or men, should be fined. Persons creating a nuisance on the highway should not only pay a fine but remove the objectionable matter. Prisons should be erected in places where the citizens can easily see the mutilated criminals suffering the punishment of their sins.

A king must not allow himself to be discouraged, however often he may fail to achieve his ambitions, for in the long run fortune favours those who persevere. It has been said that a king, as it were, prefigures the four ages of the world. He is like the Kali-yuga when he sleeps, the Dvāpara-yuga when he awakes, the Tretā yuga when he prepares for action. But when he becomes energetic and lives virtuously he is like the Kṛta-yuga.<sup>1</sup> A wise and virtuous king should seek to imitate the gods. Like Indra, who blesses and enriches the earth with the

Advice  
for kings

<sup>1</sup> The present age, or Kali-yuga, is the most deficient in virtue. And each age is worse than the one that went before. The Kṛta-yuga was the golden age. Ours is the age of iron.



rain from heaven, a king should shower blessings and prosperity upon his people. Like the sun, who day after day draws up to himself the waters of the earth, and men do not notice that he does so, a king should gradually extract from his subjects the taxes that are his due. So, too, the wind, which moves everywhere and is present in all things, illustrates the duties of a king. For by means of spies a king should find his way to the heart of everything. A king, too, is like the god of Fire, in his wrath against the wicked; like the god of Death, in waiting for men at their appointed time; like Varuṇa, in his awarding to them their due punishment;<sup>1</sup> like the Earth, in that he supports and nourishes them; like the Moon, in that his presence fills them with joy.

As a final word, kings are once more warned as to their treatment of Brāhmins. However great the difficulties in

**Beware of  
Brāhmins**

which a king is placed, he must never make a Brāhman angry,<sup>2</sup> for a Brāhman is able, by his curses, to destroy all that a king has. No one can avoid destruction who provokes these mighty men, for we know that Brāhmins by their curses have destroyed the world with fire, made the sea undrinkable, and the moon to wax and wane. Nay, even more than that, the Brāhmins are able to create other worlds and other gods, depriving the gods who now exist and rule of their authority and power.<sup>3</sup> No king who has any desire for happiness and length of days will ever dream of giving offence or causing harm to those on whom, not only the three worlds, but the very gods themselves depend. A Brāhman, be he wise or ignorant, is a mighty god, and is no more stained by evil associations or mean occupations than fire is stained by being used at the burning ground. Honour Brāhmins then, in every way, for each and every one

<sup>1</sup> Higher moral attributes are ascribed to Varuṇa than to any other Vedic god. See Rg Veda, V, 85.

<sup>2</sup> The commentators say that Brāhmins get angry, when a king takes away their property.

<sup>3</sup> If the reader consults the Mahābhārata, he will find many illustrations of a Brāhman's power. It was Viśvāmitra, who is said to have created a new world with stars, all complete. Gods had often cause to tremble in the presence of Brāhmins, and to apologise for any disrespect shewn to them.

of them is a very great god. Let the Kṣatriya render constant support to the Brāhman. The one cannot prosper without the help of the other. When old age approaches, and he feels that he can no longer efficiently rule his kingdom, a king should hand over his authority to his son and his wealth to the Brāhmans. There remains only one thing on earth left for him to do, and that is to seek a worthy end to his life by dying in battle.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> If death in battle was not possible, kings were advised to cause their own deaths, by drowning, burning or starvation.

## NOTE E

### The practice of Niyoga

In the first book of the Mahābhārata, we read that Pāṇḍu, who was childless, asked his wife Kuntī to raise up children through some Brāhman. When Kuntī objected, Pāṇḍu said that if a wife could not get a son in the proper way, it was her duty to get one somehow, that the lawgiver Manu had approved of such a practice, and that, even were it a sin, a wife must obey her husband. He added that, till very recently, women had acted like the birds and beasts, and their conduct was not only not considered sinful, but approved by the great Ṛṣis. By means of a charm which she possessed, Kuntī, however, was able to have sons by means of the gods. It was in this way that Yudhiṣṭhira and the other famous sons of Pāṇḍu were born. Pāṇḍu himself, as well as his brothers Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Vidura, were born in a somewhat similar manner. Their nominal father died childless, and Satyawatī, their grandmother, after failing to persuade her step-son, Bhīṣma, to raise up children through her dead son's widows, called to her aid another son, Vyāsa, the famous ṛṣi, who had been born to her before her marriage. Bhīṣma himself advised her to do this, saying that when Paraśu Rāma, one of the incarnations of Viṣṇu, exterminated the Kṣatriya race, on twenty-one different occasions, the Brāhman went to the childless widows, and, not lustfully, but from pure motives, raised up offspring to the warriors who had been slain.

As is well known, Svāmi Dayānada Sarasvatī, the founder of the Ārya Samāj, gives his approval to the practice of Niyoga. In his book, *Satyārth Prakāśh*, or *Light of Truth*, he quotes verses from the Rg Veda X. 40.2; X. 18.8; X. 85.45; and Atharva Veda, XIV, 2.8. He also refers to the action of Pāṇḍu and Satyawatī. His chief quotations, however, are naturally from Manu, though, as will be seen, he goes much further than Manu ventures to do, only quotes those verses which support his opinion, and entirely ignores those which are adverse. To begin with, the Svāmi asserts that the re-marriage of a twice-born man as well as of a twice-born woman is absolutely forbidden by the Śāstras, and that this injunction also forbids marriage with more than one wife or one husband. As a consequence of this law, unless a widower or widow is able to practice restraint, immoral results are sure to follow (p. 129). In view of the fact, then, that a second marriage is illegal, those who cannot control their passions are permitted to practice Niyoga, and have children born to them. (It deserves to be noted that the Svāmi's proposals are the same for both sexes, and strike at the injustice of Hinduism, which allows a man to marry as often as he likes, but denies this liberty to a widow.) It is only widowers and widows who are permitted to practice Niyoga, and they are 'to come together only when they intend to generate new life.' Their resolve to live together for this purpose is to be made public, and the

approval of good men is essential. The relationship is dissolved after two children have been born, and so far the Svāmi is in accord with one part of Manu's teaching. But he goes on to declare that a widow can associate with four separate men, and 'give birth to two children for herself, and two for each of the four husbands, by Niyoga. Similarly, a widower can beget two children for himself and two for each of the four wives by Niyoga. Thus ten children in all can be produced by means of Niyoga—this is what the Veda declares' (p. 131). The verse he quotes in support of this position is from the Rg Veda, X, 85.45; and his translation of it is as follows:

'Oh thou who art fit to procreate and art strong, do thou raise upon the married wife or upon these widows with whom thou hast contracted Niyoga, good children and make them happy. Do thou beget on thy married wife ten children, and consider her the eleventh (member of thy family). Oh woman! Let ten children be raised on thee by thy married husband, or thy husbands by Niyoga, and do thou consider thy husband as the eleventh (member of the family).'

The translation of this verse as given by Griffith differs very greatly. It is as follows:

'Oh bounteous Indra, make this bride blest in her sons and fortunate. Vouchsafe to her ten sons and make her husband the eleventh man.'

In reply to the argument that the practice of Niyoga looks very like adultery and prostitution, the Svāmi declares that it is sanctioned by the sacred law, and is no more shameful than the universally approved marriage of a youth and a maid, while it differs widely from prostitution, in that a harlot follows no law and goes with whom she pleases. He further declares that far from being sinful the practice is a good one, since it is calculated to control the appetites and provide for their satisfaction in a properly regulated fashion. This is based on the assumption that the Veda forbids re-marriage for either sex.

Further on in the same chapter Svāmi Dayānanda, in reply to a question, does not limit a person to four partners, as he did earlier, but declares that a man or a woman can contract Niyoga with eleven persons one after the other. In his support he once more quotes the verse we have already given in full. On the questioner suggesting that the number eleven refers to ten sons and the husband as the eleventh he does not stop to argue, but merely declares that such an interpretation would not even sanction a second husband, and therefore goes against Śāstrāic injunctions. Whether the number of partners, however, be four or eleven, once ten children have been born, the practice of Niyoga must cease. Those who continue to indulge thereafter will be considered guilty of lust. Both marriage and Niyoga are entered into for the object of getting children only. We have to note, however, that the practice of Niyoga is also sanctioned during the lifetime of a husband or wife. It applies not only to cases where offspring cannot be expected, but when the wife is pregnant and the husband cannot control his passions. One finds it difficult to reconcile this last provision with the already quoted state-



ment that marriage and Niyoga are entered into for the object of getting children, but not for the gratification of the passions.

As a further illustration of the way in which the Svāmi's translations differ from those of others, we find him translating Manu 9.76, as follows : ' If a husband has gone abroad in furtherance of some righteous cause, let his wife wait for eight years ; if for the acquisition of knowledge and glory, for six years ; if for the pursuit of material ends, for three years. If, after the expiry of the prescribed periods he does not turn up, she may contract Niyoga and obtain children ' (p. 138). In Bühler's translation the first sentence is practically the same, but the second sentence does not appear at all. It is true that the commentators have various opinions as to what a wife should do when the time has expired. But translations under inverted commas and commentaries are very different things. Several hold that the wife should go in search of her husband. One says that she commits no sin if she takes another husband, while another quotes the opinions of others to the same effect, as being in accordance with the precepts of Nārada and Parāśara, but he only quotes these opinions to reject them. See Bühler's translation, p. 341. The founder of the Ārya Samāj professes to be giving translations of Manu, however, and not his own opinions.

Another illustration of what looks like the mixing up of translation and private opinion is to be found in a passage on page 135. It purports to be the translation of Ṛg Veda X, 18.2. ' Oh widow ! do thou give up thinking of thy deceased husband, and choose another from among living men. But thou must understand and remember that if thou contractest Niyoga for the benefit of thy second husband with whom thou art united by performing the ceremony of joining hands, the child resulting from this union shall belong to him ; but if thou enterest into the relation of Niyoga for thy benefit, the child shall be thine. Do thou bear this in mind. Let thy husband by Niyoga also follow this law.' Professor Macdonell translates this verse as follows : ' Rise up ; come to the world of life, oh woman ; Thou liest here by one whose soul has left him. Come : thou hast now entered upon the wifehood of this thy lord who takes thy hand and woos thee.' And his explanation is that the widow is here called upon to rise from the pyre and take the hand of her new husband, doubtless a brother of the deceased, in accordance with an ancient marriage custom. (*Sanskrit Literature*, p. 126.)

Finally it is to be noted that Svāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati does not refer to the fact that the Laws of Manu give very diverse teaching regarding the practice of Niyoga, and that the verses which condemn it are more emphatic than those which approve it. On page 142, he says, ' among the Smṛtis, the Manu Smṛti alone is authentic, the interpolated verses being excepted.' It may be that he might have argued that the verses in Manu condemning the practice are interpolated, but he does not condescend to say so. He simply ignores them, and leaves the reader to imagine that Manu expresses only one opinion, and is unreservedly on his side in approving of the practice of Niyoga. See *Light of Truth*, Chapter IV, English translation by Dr. Chiranjiva Bharadwaja, published by the Ārya Pratinidhi Sabhā.

## CHAPTER X

### MIXED CASTES

THE Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya, in virtue of the fact that they are twice-born, are permitted to study the Veda, but only the Brāhman can teach it. This is a rule that no one must break. The Brāhman is endowed with a peculiar holiness, in virtue of his lofty origin, and is indeed the lord of all the other castes. As regards the Śūdra, he does not belong to the twice-born, and it is said that he has one birth only. There is no fifth caste.<sup>1</sup> It is only those sons, born of wives belonging to the same caste, that can be reckoned as belonging to the same caste as their father. Sons born to wives of the next caste lower are to be considered as members of their mothers' castes. On the other hand, sons begotten on women two castes lower are held to be base born. These evil marriages have led to the existence of the mixed castes. Thus a child born to a Brāhman and a woman of the Vaiśya caste is called an Ambaṣṭha, while the son of a Brāhman and a Śūdra wife is a Niṣāda. The succeeding verse, however, states that all unions with women of a lower caste than that of the man yield base-born children. There is, however, a practice still more evil, when a man associates with a woman of higher caste than himself. The union of a Kṣatriya with a Brāhman woman has originated the caste of charioteers called Sūta; while the most degraded of all castes, that of the Cāṇḍāla, has sprung from a Śūdra co-habiting with a woman of the Brāhmanical caste. And yet there are classes even more degraded than these, namely, when the Cāṇḍālas and others, themselves beyond the pale of the Aryan community and themselves the fruits of sin, dare to approach women of the four castes. When outcastes marry outcastes, we have still another complication; the marriage, for instance, of a Niṣāda woman

<sup>1</sup> At the present day, outcastes are called Panchamas, or fifths, in Southern India.

to a Cāṇḍāla. Their son must live and work in cemeteries, and is doomed to the contempt even of the most contemptible. In the list of degraded castes we find some names which belong also to countries, Vaideha, Māgadha and Andhra. We are also told that certain tribes of Kṣatriyas, as a result of not consulting the Brāhmins and neglecting religious rites, have sunk to the level of Śūdras. They include Draviḍas, Yavanas (Greeks), Śakas (Scythians), Pahlavas (Persians?), Kāmbojas and Cīnas (Chinese). There is one name that should be applied to all who are outside the four castes, and the name is Dasyu.<sup>1</sup> This term applies equally to degraded Aryans and those who speak the language of Mlecchas, or foreign barbarians. For base-born outcastes, such as Andhra, we read that they must not be allowed to live inside a village. Of others it is said that they must work in leather, or wear only the clothes of dead men, that their wealth must be limited to dogs and donkeys, that they must eat their food only from broken dishes, never use any metal, except black iron for ornaments, bear distinguishing marks, and be strictly confined to the occupations appointed for them. The unfortunate Cāṇḍāla is to be shunned by all men who have any regard for religion; he must act as public executioner, and carry to the grave the bodies of those who have no friends to render this service. It is easy to recognise a man who is not a member of the four castes. It is even quite easy to tell if a man, professing to be of good family, is really a legitimate son or not. If his mother has been guilty of criminal intercourse with a low-caste man, his real father's base origin will soon reveal itself. It is a terrible calamity for any country, when such bastards are born to men of good race. Robbed of pure blood, both country and people are swept away. On the other hand, if those excluded from the Aryan community are willing to give their lives to save Brāhmins, cows, women and children, they will be sure to obtain heavenly bliss.

<sup>1</sup> Dasyu means a class of evil beings, enemies of gods and men; many of the demons defeated by Indra, etc., were Dasyus. A Dasyu was supposed to have some characteristics which brought him into closer relation with men. He was a non-man, a non-Ārya. The term came to mean a barbarian, an outcaste, a wicked person. See Monier Williams' *Sanskrit Dictionary*.

There now follow several verses which hold out hope to the offspring of mixed marriages. If the daughter of a Brāhman and a Śūdra woman, as also her descendants, all marry Brāhmans for seven generations, the child of the sixth female descendant will be a Brāhman. On the other hand, if the male descendants of a Brāhman and a Śūdra women marry Śūdra wives for seven generations, the child in the seventh descent will be a pure Śūdra. This is in accordance with the principle that the son of a twice-born man and a Śūdra woman may become like his father's people in virtue; but it is not possible for the son of an Aryan mother and a low-caste father to achieve the qualities of the higher race. At this stage, Manu reverts to his parable about the comparative value of the field and the seed, and tells us once more that the seed is more important than the field. He also supports his argument by saying that men have even cohabited with animals, and that the offspring, whose birth has been so contrary to the laws of nature, have become great sages.<sup>1</sup>

The Brāhman who desires union with Brahmā, must faithfully perform the following six acts: study the Veda, offer sacrifices for himself, and make gifts; teach the Veda, offer sacrifices on behalf of others, and receive gifts. The last three of these acts are recognised as his three ways of obtaining a livelihood. Neither a Kṣatriya nor a Vaiśya must ever practice these three acts, which are confined to the Brāhman alone, and by which he lives. The Kṣatriya can earn his bread by warfare, the Vaiśya by agriculture and trade, but it is their duty, in common with the Brāhman, to study the Veda, to offer sacrifices, and to make gifts. If a Brāhman is unable

<sup>1</sup> The Mahābhārata tells of sages who not only associated with deer and cows, but also came in contact with clods of earth and water-pots. Neither the Mahābhārata nor Manu express any sort of disapproval. The story of Rṣyaśṛṅga is told in both the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa. He was called 'the deer-horned,' because of a horn which grew out of his forehead, a sure proof as to who his mother was. By getting him to marry his daughter Śāntā, Lomapāda, king of Aṅga, was able to obtain rain during a great drought. It was Rṣyaśṛṅga who performed the sacrifice for Daśaratha, which brought about the birth of Rāma, the incarnation of Viṣṇu. See Dawson's *Classical Dictionary*.



to earn a living in accordance with the rules of his own caste, he may bear arms like a Kṣatriya; and should that be impossible, he may take to farming and the rearing of cattle. The succeeding verse, however, revokes this concession as far as agriculture is concerned, on the ground that the plough gives pain to the earth with its iron coulter, and destroys the life of many insects. The Brāhman, when thus driven by the force of circumstances to earn a livelihood among the Vaiśyas, may also take to trade, but there are certain articles and goods which he must carefully avoid. They include cloth made of wool, hemp or flax, cooked food and all kinds of condiments, salt, honey, oil, wax and sugar, intoxicating liquor, poison, meat and perfumes, birds, wild beasts, animals with tusks, cattle and human beings, fresh milk, sour milk, clarified butter, water, weapōns, indigo, and all animals with one hoof. He may sell sesamum seeds for religious purposes only, provided he has grown them in his own field and they are fresh. If he dares to sell them for any other purpose, he will in his next birth be born as a worm, and along with his ancestors be plunged into the excreta of dogs. The Brāhman who sells flesh, salt and lac becomes an outcaste. Within three days he will change into a Śūdra if he sells milk. You can, however, escape the penalty sometimes by indulging in barter; for instance, you can exchange one kind of condiment for another, with the exception of salt. You can even exchange sesamum seeds for grain, and no evil result will follow.<sup>1</sup>

A Kṣatriya, in times of distress, may also take refuge in the occupation of a Vaiśya, but he must never dare to think that the life of a Brāhman is open to him. A **Times of distress** Vaiśya, too, may take refuge in a Śūdra's mode of life, but he should get out of it again as quickly as he can; and carefully avoid all practices which are forbidden by his own caste. When a Śūdra, whose duty in life is to serve the twice-born, finds that he cannot support life in this way, he may turn to mechanical occupations, and earn his bread in that

<sup>1</sup> No explanation is given as to why it is so great a sin in a Brāhman to sell sesamum, nor why he can so easily evade the sin and its punishment by bartering it for grain.

way.<sup>1</sup> When a Brāhman is unwilling to follow any other mode of life than that in which he was born, and is yet overcome with distress and hunger, there is another alternative. He may go and beg for alms, even from an outcaste. A Brāhman commits no sin in such circumstances, should he teach the Veda to a low caste or perform a sacrifice on his behalf. A Brāhman is as pure as fire and water, two things which cannot be defiled. You cannot defile the sky with mud. And so, too, when your life is in danger, you can take food from the hands of anybody, and not be defiled. We know, for instance, how the great and holy sage, Viśvāmitra, took dog's flesh from the hands of a Cāṇḍāla in the time of a great famine.<sup>2</sup> The same thing happened to Vānadeva.<sup>3</sup> He also ate dog's flesh. The Ṛṣi Bharadvāja accepted the gift of cows from a carpenter, when he and his sons were starving in a forest.<sup>4</sup> We know, too, that it was hunger which drove Ajigarta to sell his son, Śunahśepa, and even to offer him as a sacrifice.<sup>5</sup> In ordinary circumstances, the most humiliating thing a Brāhman can do is to accept gifts from a low caste. It is an act attended with the greatest consequences in the next life. If, however, you *have* offered sacrifices for an ignoble person, you can remove the guilt by muttering a few verses from the sacred books and by performing a burnt offering; but a gift must be thrown away and austerities engaged in. Better then to glean a field in harvest, better to try and satisfy your hunger by picking up grains of corn, one by one, than receive a present from a man who is base-born. Brāhmanas and Kṣatriyas should never become moneylenders. In times of distress, however, should money be required for some religious purpose, money may be lent, at a small rate of interest, and to very wicked people. A king is allowed to take one-fourth of the crops when oppressed by a similar necessity.

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Jones suggests masonry and joinery, painting and writing. These and other handicrafts had become the occupations of the outcastes or members of the mixed castes.

<sup>2</sup> See Summary of Mahābhārata, Book 12.141.

<sup>3</sup> Ṛg Veda, Book IV, 18.13.

<sup>4</sup> Sāyana refers to this in his comment on Ṛg-Veda, VI, 45.31.

<sup>5</sup> See Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, VII, 3, Haug's translation.

A Śūdra's first duty is to serve Brāhmans, though he may be employed by Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, should there be no Brāhman who requires him. By serving a

**The Śūdra's lot**

Brāhman a Śūdra makes the best of both worlds. No other kind of service carries any sort of reward: 'A Śūdra who is pure, the servant of his betters, gentle in speech and free from pride, and who always seeks a refuge with Brāhmans, attains (in his next life) a higher caste' (9.335). It is his privilege to receive from his masters the remnants of their food and their cast-off clothes; old furniture, too, and grain that is not fit to be eaten by a Brāhman, are also his portion. Nor must a Śūdra be allowed to amass property and wealth. The sight of a rich Śūdra gives pain to Brāhmans. The chances are that the Śūdra will become proud and refuse to render to the Brāhman the service and obedience which are the Brāhman's due. There are no caste rules for a Śūdra to keep or to break. There is for him no guilt in eating forbidden food. He has no share in the sacred law of the Aryans. He cannot be admitted to any of the rites and ceremonies of the twice-born. He may not repeat any of the sacred texts. But if a Śūdra is content to do his duty, within the limits of his own caste, keep his heart free from envy of those above him, and imitate their behaviour so far as that is open to him, he will not only escape censure, but win applause in this life and a more exalted station in the life to come.

#### NOTE F

##### Dravidas, etc. Their origin

It is interesting to compare Manu's view with regard to Draviḍas, Sakas, Yavanas, Pahlavas, Kāmbojas, and Cīnas, namely, that they are degraded Kṣatriyas, with the testimony of historians. The people of the South of India are still called *Drāvidians*, and much has been written with regard to their origin. Vincent Smith says, 'although our knowledge of the ancient life of the Dravidian nations is scanty, enough is known to justify the assertion that they were far from being rude barbarians when Aryan teachers first reached them, several centuries before the Christian era.'

Of the *Śakas* or Scythians, the same authority says, that 'they are first heard of about the second century B.C., being nomad tribes from Central Asia, who descended on the Indian plains, formed settlements in the Punjab, with extensions probably as far as Mathura, and occupied Kāthiāwār or Surāshtra, of which they became the masters. The ancient Indians . . . used the term in a vague way for all foreigners from the other side of the passes.' The word *Yavana* is a corruption of an 'Ionian', and was originally used for the Greeks who invaded the Punjab with Alexander, and for later Greeks. *Pahlavas* is the equivalent for Persians, but there is a disposition to identify them with Pallavas, a South Indian tribe which ruled between the Cauvery and the Kistna rivers. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says the Pallavas were degraded Kṣatriyas conquered by Sāgara and compelled by him to wear beards. The *Kāmbojas* are said to have lived either in Thibet or among the mountains of the Hindu Kush. The *Cīnas* or Chinese, are too well-known to need description.



# NOTE G

## Mixed Castes and Outcastes

The marriage of a

Brāhman	with a	Vaiśya	woman	results in the	Ambaṣṭha	caste.
"	"	Śūdra	"	"	Niṣāda	"
Kṣatriya	"	"	"	"	Ugra	"
"	"	Brāhman	"	"	Sūta	"
Vaiśya	"	Kṣatriya	"	"	Māgadha	"
"	"	Brāhman	"	"	Vaideha	"
Śūdra	"	Vaiśya	"	"	Āyogava	"
"	"	Kṣatriya	"	"	Kṣattar	"
"	"	Brāhman	"	"	Cāṇḍāla	"
Cāṇḍāla	"	Niṣāda	"	"	Antyāvasāyin	"
Niṣāda	"	Vaideha	"	"	Kārāvara	"
Vaideha	"	Kārāvara	"	"	Andhra	"

It will be noted that the well-known names of Māgadha and Vaideha appear here. The former is an opprobrious epithet for the minstrels who sing before a king. The Vaideha's business was to take charge of the harem. But these words are also used for the inhabitants of Magadha and Videha respectively, the countries of Rāma and Sītā. The name *Andhra* is still used for the Telugu-speaking inhabitants of the Madras Coast. In ancient times there was a very powerful kingdom of that name, originally lying between the Kistna and Godaveri rivers, which eventually spread right across India. We are told that the people of Kāmboja and the Andhras became followers of Buddha, 'following the law of piety as proclaimed by Asoka' (Rock Edict XII). Magadha and Videha, once the very home of India's ancient story, also fell away to Buddhism. Is there any connection here with the verse which says that 'in consequence of the omission of the sacred rites and of their not consulting Brāhmins, the following Kṣatriyas have gradually sunk . . . to the condition of Śūdras' (10.43).

Manu's condemnation of mixed marriages in this chapter does not agree with the approval he gave in Chapters 3.13, and 9.149, to Brāhmins and others marrying, in addition to a wife from their own castes, one from each of the castes below. The Law-Book of Yājñavalkya says that it does not accept of Manu's precept that a twice-born man can marry a Śūdra wife, but it declares that 'three wives in the regular order of the first three classes may belong to a Brāhman, two to a Kṣatriya and one to a Vaiśya. A Śūdra must only have one of his own class.' See Monier Williams' *Indian Wisdom*, p. 295, which places Yājñavalkya about 150 A.D. Manu's approval of inter-caste marriages, as well as of other practices, led later writers to declare that Manu's Law-Book was only intended for the Golden Age. Thus we read in Nārada's code:

Marriage with the widow of a deceased brother, the slaughter of cattle in entertaining guests, flesh meat at funeral obsequies, and the entrance into the third order (or that of a Vānaprastha), are forbidden in the fourth age. Drinking any spirituous liquor, even at a religious ceremony, the gift of a young married woman to another bridegroom if her husband should die while she is still a virgin; the marriage of twice-born men with women not of the same class; any intercourse with a man who has passed the sea in a ship; the slaughter of a bull at a sacrifice; these practices also are forbidden in the Kali-yuga. The author of Parāśarā's code says: 'The laws of different ages are different. Manu's Law-Book belongs to the Kṛta age, Gautama's to the Tretā, that of Śankha and Likhita to the Dvāpara, and Parāśarā's Code to the Kali age.' *Indian Wisdom*, p. 301.

## CHAPTER XI

### PENANCES

AMONG Brāhmans, there are nine classes or kinds who are always worthy to receive gifts. A Brāhman when on a journey;

**On gifts to  
Brahmans** a Brāhman begging on behalf of his teacher or his father or his mother ; a student of the Veda ; a Brāhman about to marry for the sake of hav-

ing a son ; a Brāhman who intends to offer a sacrifice ; a Brāhman who is sick ; and a Brāhman who has given away all his property. When such men come begging, they should receive gifts of food and money, while a king should present them with jewels of every kind. The gifts should be in proportion to the ability of the giver and the learning of the receiver. At the same time it is to be remembered, that if a rich man neglects his own family and is generous to others he may obtain the praise of men, but he will suffer for his wrongdoing in the world to come. He has tasted honey, but he will swallow poison. The man who tries to secure future happiness by injuring his family, will reap an evil reward here and hereafter. When a twice-born man, and particularly a Brāhman, discovers that he is in need of anything to make a sacrifice complete, he is entitled to go to the house of a Vaiśya who neglects his religious duties, and forcibly take possession of what he requires. He can do the same in the house of any Śūdra, for a Śūdra has nothing to do with sacrifices. In the Śūdra's case, he can take more than one article. Indeed, when a well-to-do Brāhman or Kṣatriya is neglectful of his religious duties, a sacrificer does no wrong in helping himself to their property. In the same way, a man who has been fasting may go to the house or field of an irreligious person and take what he wants, with the proviso that, should the owner appear, he must tell him what he is taking and why he does so. It is, indeed, a very pious act to take a thing from the evil-doer and give it to the righteous. The wealth of good men is the property of the gods. The property of the impious belongs to the Asuras.

No king, who has regard for righteousness will ever punish the man who helps himself to the property of the Asuras. It is a king's business to see to it that the Brāhman's wants are all supplied; and he should make enquiry as to the size of a Brāhman's family, and assist him in proportion to his needs, his piety and learning. When he does so, he will acquire for himself no less than a sixth part of such a Brāhman's religious merit.

The Brāhman who asks for help from a Śūdra, in connection with a sacrifice, will be born a Cāṇḍāla in his next life. The Brāhman who begs for more than he requires or uses in a sacrifice will be born as a vulture or as a crow. The man who steals the property of the gods or of the Brāhmans will have to eat in the next world what the vultures have left over. There is no reward for the man, who, in the performance of his religious duties, has had to exercise no self-denial.

It is not necessary for a Brāhman to appeal to the king to right his wrongs or to punish anyone who has done him harm.

**The Brahman's  
weapon**

He can take the law into his own hands, on the ground that a Brāhman is greater than a king. It is not, however, the sword or the rod of justice which a Brāhman wields. He has at his disposal the sacred texts, which are to be found in the Atharva Veda;<sup>1</sup> and by their means he will be able to destroy his enemies. The Kṣatriya overcomes his difficulties by the power of the sword. The Vaiśya and Śūdra call wealth to their aid. But the Brāhman finds a sure deliverance by muttering texts and making sacrifices.<sup>2</sup> Let all men then beware of what they say to a Brāhman, for the Brāhman is the creator and judge of the earth. He is the source of all men's happiness, and the teacher of the sacred law.

A person who has not been initiated, a fool, a girl, a young married woman, an ignorant man, and one who is in great distress, will all go to hell if they venture to make a burnt

<sup>1</sup> Called the cursing Veda, because of the charms and incantations which it contains.

<sup>2</sup> The Mahābhārata contains many illustrations of Brāhmans, sages, and ascetics, who by means of curses and sacrifices were able to destroy those who had offended them.



offering. A man may have full control of his senses and be possessed of faith. But these virtues will secure him no reward if he does not pay the appointed fee or gives less than he ought. Length of days, honour, heavenly bliss, children, and all that he has, even his power of movement, of seeing and hearing, will be lost, if he gives less than the fee that is appointed.

It is very necessary that men should undergo penances for their sins. If they do not do so, they will be certain to suffer

**Penance** either in this birth or in the next. You can tell merely by looking at some people, or by noting their physical defects, that they have been guilty of some crime, either in this or in a former existence. For instance, the man who steals a Brāhman's gold has, or will have, diseased nails; the man who drinks the intoxicant called Surā will have black teeth; the man who kills a Brāhman, consumption; the theft of a lamp will produce blindness; the theft of clothes, leprosy; and the putting out of a lamp will make a man one-eyed. Men are born deaf, dumb, blind, deformed or insane, because of some evil thing that they did in a former life.

There are four mortal sins: (1) killing a Brāhman, (2) drinking Surā, (3) stealing a Brāhman's gold, (4) defiling the bed of one's religious teacher. To associate

**Deadly sins** with persons guilty of these sins involves a man in their guilt. But there are other sins which are reckoned as equally heinous. They include (a) pretending to be of a higher caste than you really are; (b) making a false charge against your religious teacher; (c) telling a king about some crime that has been committed; (d) giving false evidence; (e) killing a friend; (f) eating unlawful food; (g) forgetting or reviling the Veda; (h) stealing a man, a horse, silver, land and gems; (i) carnal intercourse with a woman of the lowest caste, with a sister whose mother is the same as your own, with the wife of your son or of your friend, and with an unmarried girl. These are all reckoned as major sins (*Mahāpātaka*), but the commentators call attention to the fact that the penances required for their atonement are not equally heavy.

We are next given a list of minor sins (*upapātaka*). They include (a) the killing of cows; (b) adultery; (c) abandoning a

parent, son or teacher; (*d*) neglecting the daily study of the Veda; (*e*) allowing your younger brother to marry before you do; (*f*) selling your wife or child, selling a tank or garden, selling yourself; (*g*) teaching the Veda for money, paying for instruction in the Veda; (*h*) sorcery; (*i*) usury; (*j*) defiling an unmarried girl; (*k*) living on your wife's earnings; (*l*) superintending mines; (*m*) building dams across rivers; (*n*) cutting down green trees; (*o*) dancing and singing; (*p*) stealing grain or cattle; (*q*) killing women, Śūdras, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas; (*r*) intercourse with women who drink intoxicants; and (*s*) atheism. These are all minor sins and involve loss of caste. The following crimes also involve loss of caste or reduce a man to the level of the mixed castes: (*a*) striking a Brāhman; (*b*) cheating; (*c*) smelling intoxicating liquor or eating food that has stood near it; (*d*) unnatural vice with a man; (*e*) killing insects or birds, killing a donkey, a sheep, a horse and other specified animals; (*f*) working for a Śūdra; and (*g*) telling lies.

1. Several penances are prescribed for the slayer of a Brāhman. (1) He shall build a hut in a forest and live there for twelve years. At the door of his hut he shall display the skull of the man he slew. He shall depend on alms for maintenance. (2) He shall seek the hottest place in battle, making himself a target for archers, or cast himself thrice into a blazing fire. (3) He shall walk a distance of seven hundred miles, reciting one of the Vedas all the time and eating very little food. (4) He shall offer one of certain sacrifices whose names are given. They include the horse sacrifice and the Gosava or cow-sacrifice. (5) He shall give all his property to a learned Brāhman, or at least enough to maintain him. (6) He shall walk along the banks of the river Sarasvatī from its mouth to its source, eating very little, repeating one of the Vedas thrice. (7) He shall shave his head and live in a cow-house, or in a hermitage, or below a tree, devoting himself to the service of cows and Brāhmans. (8) He shall fight no less than three times against robbers in defence of a Brāhman's property, recover that property or die in the attempt. At the end of twelve years, the man, who has been faithful to his vow, kept his organs under control, and

devoted his mind to this one object, will be cleansed of his guilt of killing a Brāhman.<sup>1</sup> The man who is willing to die on behalf of Brāhman is sure to find atonement. The Brāhman is the root of the sacred law, the Kṣatriya is its crown. If you confess your sin in the presence of these two and make due atonement, you will be all right. Even the gods look upon the Brāhman as a god; and what the Brāhman say ought to be accepted as based on the revealed word of revelation. Two verses are added. One indicates that all the penances set forth as above are for Brāhman who kill members of their own caste. The other says that these penances are only for those who have killed a Brāhman by accident; because no penance can wipe away the crime of premeditated murder where a Brāhman is concerned (90).

2. The twice-born man, be he Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Brāhman, must not drink Surā, a liquor distilled from ground rice. It is the second of the great sins. If he **Drinking Surā** does (1) he should be made to drink more of it, boiling hot, and keep on drinking it, till he is thoroughly scalded; (2) as an alternative he may drink cow's urine, or milk, or water, or liquid cow-dung, boiling hot until he dies; (3) failing these two penances, he should be confined to one meal a day for twelve months. The meal should consist of grains of rice. He should be made to wear his hair in braids, and go about carrying a sign of his crime.<sup>2</sup> No twice-born person must ever dare to drink Surā made from ground rice. There are two other intoxicants, one made from molasses, the other from honey, and these also are forbidden to Brāhman.<sup>3</sup> All kinds of intoxicants, as well as flesh, are the

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<sup>1</sup> Commentators say the first penance is for an ignorant Brāhman who intentionally kills an utterly worthless caste-fellow. The second is for a very learned Brāhman, who accidentally kills a Brāhman who is a Brāhman in name only. The fifth is when a rich, unlearned Brāhman unintentionally kills a very worthless Brāhman. Others are said to be for very distinguished twice-born men, who unintentionally kill a man who is only a Brāhman in name.

<sup>2</sup> Commentators think this third penance is for those who have drunk Surā liquor by accident.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas might use these two liquors without sin.

food and drink of demons and other evil creatures. How then can a Brāhman, whose duty and privilege it is to consume what has been offered to the gods, share in such unholy food and drink. For think of it! When in a state of intoxication a Brāhman might fall on some impure thing, or utter the sacred words of the Veda and not pronounce them properly. You cannot soak with unholy liquor the Veda that dwells within you and hope to remain a Brāhman. You have reduced yourself to the level of a Śūdra.

3. The man who steals a Brahman's gold should go, carrying a club, into the presence of the king, and, confessing his sin, call upon the king to punish him. The king must take the club and smite him. By doing the thief will be purged of his sin. The performance of austerities is enough penance when a Brāhman is the thief.

4. For the crime of violating a Guru's bed, the following penances are prescribed : (1) The guilty man shall die by being extended on a red-hot iron-bed, or by having to embrace the red-hot image of a woman. (2) He shall cut off his organ of generation, and, carrying it in his joined hands, walk in a south-westerly direction till he drops down dead. (3) He shall put on bark and carrying the foot of a bed, go to a forest and there pass a year observing a penance called Kṛcchra, which involves a partial fast for nine, and a complete fast for three, days out of every twelve. (4) He shall observe the lunar penance, called Cāndrāyaṇa, for three months. In this penance the penitent diminishes his food by one mouthful each day during the dark half of the month, and increases it by one mouthful each day during the bright half.<sup>1</sup> Commentators explain the difference in severity by saying that the milder punishments are for those who sinned in ignorance, or, assuming that the word *guru* applies to a father as well as to a religious teacher, when the woman with whom the culprit sinned was only his step-mother.

<sup>1</sup> This penance is called the ant-shaped one, because the lean days are in the middle. As at present observed the penitent's largest meal is fifteen mouthfuls, his smallest nothing at all.



(1) The first, in order of minor sins, is that of *killing a cow*.<sup>1</sup> The guilty person must drink for a month nothing but

**Minor sins**

barley gruel, shave off all his hair, cover himself with the skin of the murdered cow, and and live in a cow-house. During the next two months he must fast the half of every second day, bathe in a cow's urine, attend the cows by day, breathing in the dust they raise, and by night remain seated without any support, paying the cows reverence. He must sit when they lie down, and stand when they get up. In all weathers he must follow them, defending them from thieves and wild beasts, never thinking of his own comfort, anxious only to help and benefit the cows. The man who faithfully carries out the penance for three months will be purged of his guilt. But there is one thing more. He must present to some learned Brāhman ten cows and one bull. If he has not as many cows as that to give, then he must hand over to the Brāhman the whole of his property.

(2) The student who breaks his vow of chastity must offer to Nirṛti, the goddess of destruction, a one-eyed ass. This offering must be made at night time, and in a place where four roads meet. Thereafter he must present oblations of clarified butter to Agni, Indra, Brhaspati and Vāta.<sup>2</sup> All the time he should recite verses from the Veda. The guilty student must also dress himself in the skin of the ass, and beg from door to door, telling the people what crime he has committed and how he has broken his vow. The alms he begs must be sufficient for only one meal. After a year's penance he may be declared free from his sin.

(3) For crimes causing *loss of caste* a man must perform the Kṛcchra penance already described, if he did so by accident, but if he purposely and with full knowledge committed his crime, he must live, for seven days, on the five products of the cow, namely urine, dung, milk, sour milk and clarified butter, and a preparation of kusha grass. This is called the Sāntapana Kṛcchra.

(4) For *killing* a Kṣatriya the penance is one-fourth of that for killing a Brāhman; for killing a Vaiśya one-eighth;

<sup>1</sup> Later Hinduism would not approve of cow-killing being included among the lesser sins.

<sup>2</sup> Another name for Vāyu, the wind-god.

and for killing a pious Śūdra, one sixteenth. The context indicates that the penance referred to is the twelve years penance in the forest which the murderer of a Brāhman sometimes undergoes. In lieu of these penances, the price of a Kṣatriya's blood is reckoned at one thousand cows, that of a Vaiśya's at one hundred and that of a Śūdra's at ten.<sup>1</sup> For killing a cat, a frog, a dog, an owl, a crow, or a blue jay, the same penance must be enforced as for killing a Śūdra (132). Or the guilty person may choose one of the following: (a) to drink only milk for three days, (b) to walk seven hundred miles, (c) to bathe in a river, (d) or to mutter a hymn (Ṛg Veda, X, 9) addressed to the waters. As these penances vary greatly—the hymn is only a few lines in length, and it is no great hardship to live on milk alone—the punishment is said to depend on the caste and other circumstances of the guilty person. For killing a snake even a Brāhman must suffer. Let him present an iron spade to a caste fellow. For killing a eunuch, a man must pay a load of straw and a certain quantity of lead. For killing a peacock or a monkey, he must give a cow. For killing a donkey, a year-old calf. For killing an adulterous women of any of the four castes, he must give a leather bag, a cow, a goat, or a sheep, in accordance with their castes. That is presumably a bag for a Brāhman and a sheep for a Śūdra woman.

(5) For eating dried meat, mushrooms growing on the ground, or meat whose nature is not known, the lunar penance is appointed. For eating the flesh of pigs, camels, donkeys, crows, and carnivorous animals, as also the flesh of human beings, a man must drink hot water, hot milk, hot clarified butter, and inhale hot air for three days. The lunar penance is also the punishment for those who swallow the ordure or urine of a village pig, donkey, camel, jackal, monkey or crow. The man who even smells the breath of one who has been drinking Surā must suppress his breath three times and eat clarified butter. To touch anything that has touched Surā, involves fresh initiation for a twice-born man. If a man finds that he has eaten forbidden food, he must vomit it up as quickly as he can.

<sup>1</sup> As, in the case of the Brāhman, commentators say, that these penances are for accidental homicide.

(6) For *stealing* certain kinds of food, a bed, a carriage, and flowers, a man must swallow the five products of the cow (*pañcagavya*); for stealing men and women, as also wells, houses and fields, the lunar penance is appointed.

(7) As to sins of *immorality*; some of these sins and their penalties have already been referred to. The following are new. For intercourse with an animal,<sup>1</sup> for an unnatural crime with a woman, the penance is living for seven days on kuśa grass and the five products of the cow. For an unnatural crime with another man, or with a woman in a cart drawn by oxen or in water, the guilty man must bathe with his clothes on. The twice-born man who has carnal intercourse once with a Cāṇḍāla woman cannot be cleansed in less than three years, during which time he must daily repeat the sacred texts and live entirely on alms.

(8) With regard to outcastes, it is said that sitting on the same seat with an outcaste or eating with him reduces a twice-born man to the outcaste's level, and his relatives must go through the ceremony for the dead, for he is really dead to them. Nor must those relatives speak to him, sit besides him, or give him any share of his inheritance. When his penance has been accomplished, however, he can be restored to all his privileges.

(9) *Miscellaneous sins.* (a) The twice-born man who has not learned the Sāvitrī text<sup>2</sup> can be purified by a triple repetition of the Kṛcchra penance, which will involve in all thirty-six days of fasting, during nine of which he will abstain entirely from food. (b) The same penance is awarded to those who have failed to learn the Veda or who engage in unlawful occupations. (c) For accepting presents from bad men a Brāhman must repeat the Sāvitrī text three thousand times and live for a month with the cows, milk being his only food during that time (195). When he seeks restoration at the hands of his caste fellows they must seek for a sign. And this is the sign. If the cows eat the grass, which the culprit spreads before them, his crime is supposed to have been expiated.

<sup>1</sup> The commentators, as also the Institutes of Viṣṇu (53-7), make an exception of the cow.

<sup>2</sup> For Sāvitrī or Gāyatrī text, see page 35.

(d) Refusal to help a suppliant and imparting a knowledge of the Veda to those who ought not to hear it, can be atoned for by living for a year on barley. (e) The man who threatens to strike a Brāhman with a stick will lie in hell for a hundred years. To actually strike a Brāhman will entail one thousand years in hell. To make a Brāhman's blood flow is an awful offence. For every particle of dust that is caused to coagulate by the Brāhman's blood, the guilty man will have to spend a thousand years in hell.

In conclusion, Manu tells us that the Rudras, Ādityas, Vasus, Maruts, and the great sages, practised the lunar penance (Cāndrāyana), and by so doing were delivered from all evil. It is, therefore, a penance of great value, and is strongly recommended to ordinary men. But, in addition, the performer of the penance must make burnt offerings, recite the great Vyāhrtis,<sup>1</sup> and himself refrain from anger, falsehood, dishonesty and injury to all living things. He must not talk to Śūdras, outcastes and women. He must bathe three times by day and three times by night. He must stand in the day time, and keep sitting in the night time. He must worship the gods and the Brāhmans. In this way shall a man be delivered from his sins. There then follows words which deserve to be given in full: 'By confession, by repentance, by austerity, and by reciting the Veda, a sinner is freed from his guilt, and, in case no other course is possible, by liberality. In proportion as a man who has done wrong himself confesses it, even so far he is freed from guilt, as a snake from its slough. In proportion as his heart loathes his evil deed, even so far is his body freed from that guilt. He who has committed a sin and has repented is freed from that sin, but he is purified only by the resolution of ceasing to sin and thinking, "*I will do so no more.*" Having thus considered in his mind what results will arise from his deeds after death, let him always be good in thoughts, speech and actions.'<sup>2</sup>

When a man still feels restless in heart and is afraid his penances have not been enough or sufficiently powerful to cleanse his sin, he should go through his austerities a second

<sup>1</sup> Bhūr, Bhuvah and Svar, see page 35.

<sup>2</sup> Manu 11.228-32. Bühler's translation.



time. We know from the Veda, that the happiness of both gods and men depends on the practice of austerities. In austerities their happiness obtained its origin. It is by means of austerities that their happiness continues. It is through austerities that their happiness achieves its crown. 'Whatever is hard to be traversed, whatever is hard to be attained, whatever is hard to be reached, whatever is hard to be performed, all this may be accomplished by austerities; for austerity possesses a power which it is difficult to surpass' (11.239). Insects, birds, snakes, moths and bees can all obtain heaven if they practice austerities. The gods give all that he asks for, to the Brāhman who practices austerities. A man burns up all his sins of thought, word and deed by means of penance. Penance is the only true wealth. It was by means of austerities that Prajāpati was able to create this sacred law, the Institutes of Manu. The Veda could never have been revealed to the sages if they had not practiced austerities. If you read the Veda every day, perform the appointed sacrifices to the best of your power, and be patient in the midst of suffering, you will be cleansed from even deadly sins.

What has been said above refers to those sins which have become known to the world. For secret sins another class of penances is now set forth. (1) For killing even a learned Brāhman, you will be cleansed in a month, if you suppress the breath sixteen times for a month and recite the Vyāhrtis and the sacred syllable OM every day.<sup>1</sup> (2) For drinking Surā, it will be enough if you mutter the following hymns, Rg Veda I, 97, 1; VII, 80; X, 185, and VIII, 84.7-9. (3) For stealing a Brāhman's gold, it will be enough to mutter once Rg Veda I, 164. (4) Violating the bed of one's spiritual teacher is atoned for by repeating four hymns from the tenth Maṇḍala of the Rg Veda (88, 90, 119 and 126).<sup>2</sup> Indeed, any sin, be it great or small, can be wiped out if you repeat for the space of a year two verses from the Rg Veda (I, 24.14, and VII,

<sup>1</sup> See page 39.

<sup>2</sup> It will be noticed that these are all major sins, for which a grievous punishment was awarded. Apparently they were not considered serious till they were found out.

89.5), while many sins can be annulled by repeating for a month four verses addressed to Soma and Rudra, and three verses addressed to Aryaman, Varuṇa and Mitra. It is necessary to be bathing in a river at the time.

A knowledge of the whole of the Ṛg Veda is very efficacious. A Brāhman might have destroyed the three worlds, he might have eaten with anybody. But if he knows and remembers the whole of the Ṛg Veda, no sin attaches to him, and no guilt can stain him. There is one hymn called the Aghamarṣaṇa (Ṛg Veda, X, 190). It is as powerful in removing sin as the horse-sacrifice, and men say that the horse-sacrifice is the king of sacrifices and able to remove every kind of sin. Just as a clod of earth falling into a great lake dissolves and disappears, so do the sins of men dissolve and disappear, each and all of them, in the great sea of the triple Veda.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to believe that the man who composed the noble verses, 228-32, in this chapter, could also have written this concluding section dealing with secret sins and the power that lies in repeating words, however sacred they may be supposed to be.

## CHAPTER XII

### TRANSMIGRATION AND FINAL BEATITUDE

At this stage, the listening sages declared that Bhṛgu had expounded the whole duty of man, and, calling him the sinless one, they begged that he would next unfold to them what harvest men would have to reap for the deeds they had done. To this Bhṛgu

**Sins of mind,  
speech and body** replied that acts were always followed by results, either good or bad, and that man's condition, be it good, bad or indifferent, was determined by these acts, which originate in the mind, speech or body. (1) The sins of the mind are three in number: covetousness, wrong thoughts and wrong beliefs. (2) The sins of speech are four in number: falsehood, detraction, abuse and idle talk. (3) The sins of the body are three in number: theft, injury to others and adultery. In punishment for mental sins, men are reborn in a low caste; for sins of speech, they are reborn as birds or beasts; for sins of the body, they are reborn in inanimate objects. When a man carries about with him the three staves (*tridaṇḍa*), they call him an ascetic (*tridaṇḍin*), but he alone is that true ascetic, who has acquired a triple control over mind, speech and body.

In view of the different interpretations put upon the next few verses by Hindu commentators, in accordance with their own particular philosophical views, it will be best to quote in full from Bühler's translation. 'Him who impels this (corporeal) Self to action, they call the Kṣetrajña (the knower of the field); but him who does the acts, the wise name, the Bhūtātman (the Self consisting of the elements). Another internal Self that is generated with all embodied Kṣetrajñas is called Jiva, through which the Kṣetrajña becomes sensible of all pleasure and pain in successive births. These two, the Great One and the Kṣetrajña, who are closely united with the elements, pervade him who resides in the multiform created beings. From his body innumerable forms go forth,

which constantly impel the multiform creatures to action'<sup>1</sup> (12-15).

After death, the wicked are endowed with a strong body specially prepared to endure the torments of hell, at the hands of Yama, the lord of death. When they have suffered for their sin and been purged of its stain, they enter the presence of the Great One, and the Supreme Soul, who never grows weary in examining and judging the merits and demerits of the individual soul. For it should be known that when merit predominates, the soul achieves happiness in heaven; when demerit predominates, it has to endure the misery of hell. But having paid the price or exhausted its reward, the soul has to come back and live once more on earth, clothed with the five elements.<sup>2</sup> When a man realises that these changes befall him, he is wise if he resolves to heap up merit for himself. All existences are pervaded by the three qualities at all times. They are called goodness (*Sattva*), activity or passion (*Rajas*), and darkness or ignorance (*Tamas*). The character of each soul depends on which of these three qualities dominates the body.

1. The learned man is pervaded by the quality of goodness; his great desire is to gain spiritual merit, and the marks by which he is distinguished are the study of the Veda, the practice of austerities, the pursuit of knowledge, purity and self-control, the performing of acts by which merit can be obtained and meditation.

2. The quality of darkness pervades the ignorant man. He is devoted to sins of the flesh, and the marks by which he can be distinguished are covetousness, love of sleep, cowardice, cruelty, atheism, neglect of the rules of conduct, and neglect of duty.

3. The quality of activity expresses itself in love and hatred, while the acquisition of wealth is the great desire of

<sup>1</sup> To use the words of Monier Williams, much of the teaching in Manu is based on doctrines of the Sāṅkhya and Vedānta, before they had diverged into distinct systems.

<sup>2</sup> Mahat, or the Great One, is the second of the twenty-four topics of the Sāṅkhya. It is also called Intellect or Buddhi, and is the first production of Prakṛti, the 'eternally existing essence, that which evolves everything else.'

The Supreme Soul is the Paramātmā of the Vedānta.



the man who is possessed by this quality. He can be recognised by the pleasure which he finds in work, by his discontentedness, by his evil deeds and sensuality.

1. When these three classes of men are again subject to transmigration, they differ widely. The first becomes a god,

**Condition of  
rebirth**

the second descends to the level of the beasts, the third is reborn among men. In each of these three classes, also, there are three subdivisions, making nine in all ; and these are the fruit of the three qualities operating in the world. To begin with darkness (1), its lowest subdivision (*a*) contains trees and such like existences not possessed of motion, insects, fishes snakes, tortoises, cattle, and wild animals. The next in order (*b*) includes elephants, horses, Śūdras and Mlecchas (*i.e.* foreigners, barbarians), lions, tigers and boars. The third (*c*) comprises panegyrist or birds, hypocrites, the Suparṇas or bird deities, and the demons known as Rakṣas and Piśācas.

2. The three sub-divisions of those whose lot in life has been due to the quality of *activity* are as follows: (*a*) wrestlers, jesters, actors, gamblers, persons engaged in degrading occupations, and those who drink liquor. (*b*) Kings and all members of the Kṣatriya caste, royal priests, and those who find joy in fighting with their tongues. (*c*) Evil spirits, called Guhyakas, who injure children; the Yakṣas, who guard the treasures of Kuvera, the god of wealth; and the Gandharvas and Apsarasas, who minister to the comfort and amusement of the gods in heaven.

3. The predominance of goodness leads to these three stages of blessedness. (*a*) Hermits, ascetics, Brāhmins, the Vaimānikā Deities (who move about in their air chariots called Vimāns), the lunar mansions and the Daityas.<sup>1</sup> (*b*) Those who have offered sacrifices, the ṛṣis, the Vedas,<sup>2</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> The Daityas came to be reckoned as evil spirits, but there was a time when they were considered as the elder brothers of the gods, with whom they contested the sovereignty of heaven.

<sup>2</sup> Commentators explain the Vedas to mean either 'sounds placed in a certain sequence,' or the deities who guard the Vedas or their personification. With regard to the 'heavenly lights' and the 'years,' there is a similar doubt as to whether it is the things themselves that are meant or their personification.

heavenly lights, the years, the manes and the Sādhyas. (c) Brahmā and the creators of the Universe,<sup>1</sup> the law, the Great One, and the Undiscernible One.<sup>2</sup>

Men, in their folly, are to blame for what they are and what they have to endure. They are suffering the punishment which their own sins have brought upon them.

**Transmigrations  
described**

And those who have committed what are called major or mortal sins must, before their return to earth, spend very many years in the torments of awful hells, and thereafter take birth among the lowest of created things, as we shall shew. The murderer of a Brāhman is born again as a dog, a pig, an ass, a camel, a *cow*,<sup>3</sup> a goat, a sheep, a deer, a bird, a Cāṇḍāla, or even as some baser outcaste. The Brāhman who drinks intoxicants will be born again as an insect, a moth, an unclean bird feeding on filth, or some destructive beast. The Brāhman who steals a Brāhman's gold will have to endure no less than one thousand rebirths in the bodies of spiders, snakes, lizards, crocodiles and demons of the most malignant kind.<sup>4</sup> The man who commits sin with the wife of his religious teacher will endure one hundred transmigrations and live in the form of grass, creepers and shrubs. He will also have to inhabit the bodies of flesh-eating birds and beasts, like vultures and tigers. For taking delight in injuring others, a man will become a carnivorous creature; for eating forbidden food, a worm; for associating with women of the lowest caste, an evil spirit. There is a long list of the varied transmigrations which follow in consequence of different kinds of theft. We give a few. For stealing grain a man is born again as a rat; for stealing gems and other precious things, a goldsmith; for stealing sweets, a dog; for stealing milk, a

<sup>1</sup> See 1.35, where we are told that ten great sages, the Prajāpatīs, Marīci, Bhṛgu, Nārada, etc., created the seven other Manus, the gods, animals, and men; indeed, the whole creation.

<sup>2</sup> The Great One is Buddhi, or Intellect, of the Sāṅkhya philosophy, the first product of Prakṛti. The Undiscernible One is presumably the Supreme Soul of the Vedānta philosophy, though some find for it another meaning.

<sup>3</sup> It is very remarkable that the cow should appear in this list.

<sup>4</sup> This looks as if Brāhmans had succeeded in making other castes too afraid to steal a Brāhman's gold.

crow; for stealing cooked food, a porcupine; for stealing uncooked food, a hedgehog; for stealing fruit, a monkey; for stealing vegetables, a peacock; for stealing salt, a cricket. The man who fails to keep to the occupation allotted to his caste will have to pass through certain degrading transmigrations, and then be born as the servant of a Dasyu, who is himself an outcaste and a barbarian. As to the Brāhman who neglects the duty of his order, he will be born as an evil spirit that lives on what others have vomited. The Kṣatriya who has been unfaithful to his class will also be born as an evil spirit which feeds on dead bodies and all manner of uncleanness. Similar punishments await the Vaiśya and the Śūdra who break the rules and do not adhere to the regulations of their castes. In the form of evil spirits, the one will be condemned to live on pus, the other on moths or lice.

The more a man sins the more will he suffer, and the more he indulges in sin, especially sins of the flesh, the more pleasure does he find in them. Think, then, of the pains that men must endure in all these different hells, think of the forest, whose leaves are as sharp as swords; think of how you may be boiled in jars, devoured by owls and ravens, be rolled in burning sand, be afflicted with heat and cold, and every kind of terror.<sup>1</sup> Think of the numerous rebirths, and the agony they entail. Think of how you may have to live in bondage to others. Think of how you may have to live with evil men, deprived of friends and kinsfolk and those you love. Think of old age, which none can stay. Think of disease and pain. Think, above all, of death, whom no one can overcome. And, thinking of these things, remember that a man reaps what he sows.

On the other hand, consider those acts which yield eternal bliss to the man who belongs to the Brāhman caste. They are as follows: study of the Veda, austerities, acquirement of true knowledge, self-control, abstinence from injuring others, and obedience to one's religious teacher. And of all these, the best and most efficient is the study of the Veda. It undoubtedly

<sup>1</sup> A list of twenty-one hells is given in Chap. 4, 88, 89.

achieves immortality. Of Vedic acts, however, there are two kinds. The *first*, already described, secures happiness in heaven, but it involves rebirth, the continuation of this earthly round of birth and death, while the *second* kind will secure final liberation, and transmigration will have ceased for ever. By carrying out the former a man becomes equal to the gods, for this has been the object of his efforts. But when his acts are performed without any thought of, or desire for, a reward, he has escaped from the shackles of earth and time. Such a man does not need to offer the Vedic sacrifices. He has found the Self in all things and all things in the Self. And so he sacrifices to the Self alone. He has obtained the knowledge of the Soul; he is master of himself; he knows the Veda; he has arrived at the condition of Brahma. It is only in this way that a twice-born man, and in particular a Brāhman, can hope to achieve the crown of life.<sup>1</sup>

The Veda is inspired. It could not have been produced by human reason, nor can human reason ever comprehend it.

**Praise of the  
Veda**

There is no doubt about that. The traditions and philosophies of men, not founded in the Veda, are all the works of darkness. Men put forth theories of their own fashioning. They spring up quickly but they perish as quickly, and they are all new-fangled ideas of yesterday, as useless as they are false.<sup>2</sup> It is the knowledge to be found in the eternal Veda, which is the foundation and stay of all that is, and it is through the Veda that everything endowed with life is able to obtain happiness. The four castes, the three worlds, the four orders, the past, the present and the future, sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, the knowledge of these things or their source is all in the Veda. No one is fit to command an army, to act as judge, to rule the earth, if he does not know the Veda. The knowledge of the Veda is better than the practice of austerities.

<sup>1</sup> These passages, say the commentators, and quite reasonably, mean that a man discovers he is himself the deity to whom sacrifices are offered, indeed, that he is, as it were, the whole world, and all created beings are contained in him. The first set of acts implies action; the second cessation from all action. See *Indian Wisdom*, page 33.

<sup>2</sup> Commentators point to the teachings of the Jainas and the Philosophy of Cārvāka, etc., as the evil doctrines referred to by Manu.



They are both able to destroy guilt, but the knowledge of the Veda can deliver a man from the weary cycle of rebirth. The knowledge of the Veda, however, is not an easy task. It involves not merely a study of the book of revelation itself, but also of those laws which are recognised as Tradition; and in addition the methods of reasoning by which the Veda can be properly understood. Heretical works, however, which deny the authority of the Veda, must not be used. Should there be any point which has not been referred to, and men want to know what they ought to do, the answer is that the decision of the most learned Brāhmans should be followed. They may be ten in number, or three, if each of them knows one of the three Vedas; even one Brāhman is enough if he knows all the Vedas. Their opinion is of infinitely more value than that of tens of thousands of ignorant men.

Bhṛgu now declares that his task has been completed. He has told the listening sages all that they require to know.

**The Self in all things** He has shewn them the path that leads to liberation. That Brāhman who sees the universe in the Self and the Self in all things, both the real and the unreal, will never allow unrighteousness to take possession of his heart. The universe rests on the Self. The Self is the multitude of the gods. Let him dwell on these facts, that the ether and the bodily cavities are one; that the wind and the organs of motion and touch are one; that the light and the digestive organs as well as sight are one; that water and the fluids of the body are one; that earth and the solid parts of the body are one; that the god Viṣṇu and a man's powers of locomotion are one; that the god Hara<sup>1</sup> and a man's bodily strength are one; that Agni, the god of fire, and man's speech are one; that the god Mitra and human excretions are one; that Prajāpati, the lord of creatures and man's organ of generation are one; and that the moon and his internal organ are one. This also

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<sup>1</sup> Hara is another name for Śiva. This is the only passage where Viṣṇu and Śiva are mentioned. Brahmā, the other member of the Hindu trinity is, of course, frequently referred to. But Brahmā belongs to the Vedic period, as well as to later times. A various reading for Hara is Hari, i.e. Indra.

the true Brāhman ought to know, that Puruṣa, the primeval male, is the lord of all, smaller than the smallest, as bright as gold, not to be perceived except when the intellect is in a state of profound thought akin to sleep. To this primeval male, men give many names. Some call him Agni, the god of fire, others call him Manu; others say that he is the god Indra; others that he is the eternal Brahma, or that he is the vital air. But this is sure that he pervades and fills all created things, as they take their shape in and through the five elements, and he is constantly re-making them, as they revolve on the endless wheel of birth, growth and decay. The man who recognises all this, who finds the Self in all things by means of the Self, has entered into union with Brahma, than which there is no higher state.

If a member of the twice-born castes reads the Laws of Manu, he will be virtuous in his conduct at all times and will attain to any condition he may desire.

## NOTE H

### Authorship and date of the Code of Manu

The first chapter makes Manu Svâyambhuva say that his laws were revealed to him at the beginning by Prajāpati or Brahmā the Creator. It will be remembered that this Manu is the first of seven Manus, and that he was responsible for the first creation, whereas it was Manu Vaivasvata to whom the present or seventh creation owes its origin. The existing world is now in its fourth and last stage of existence. As each creation has allotted to it a period of over four million years, it will be realised that a very great antiquity is claimed for the first promulgation of the laws. This claim, however, as the reader will have realised, is not adhered to throughout the work. Even the first chapter, in its descriptions of creation, shews that the laws were composed not for a vanished world or for a past golden age in which righteousness prevailed, but for the world with which we are acquainted, and an age that can make no lofty claim to virtue, while in the succeeding chapters even the claim that the book was communicated 'at the beginning' to Manu Svâyambhuva is limited or annulled in many passages.

For example, we are told of individuals, whose names are given, of what they did and the example they set. Young Kavi, the son of Aṅgiras (2.151) taught his relatives, who were old enough to be fathers. King Veṇa (7.41; 9.66) perished through want of humility. He formerly possessed the whole world. It was he who first caused a confusion of castes, his intellect being destroyed by lust. It was in his time, too, that men first indulged in the practice of Niyoga. Even Manu himself, though it is not said which Manu, attained to royal dignity as a reward of his virtues. We have references also to ṛṣhis and others, such as Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, whose names figure in the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata. If these lived before the present evil age, it is not claimed that they also lived in previous creations. But in addition to these great persons, who belong more or less to the region of myth and legend, the book tells us of races known to the prosaic pages of history, the history of Europe and the West, as well as to that of India. It speaks of the Greeks, and Scythians and Persians. We are told also that in various matters, difference of opinion prevailed among those qualified to judge, e.g. as to the time when the funeral cake should be offered (3.261); as to who should claim the child begotten of a woman by a stranger (9.32), it being said, in this connection, that the difference prevailed not only among many ancient sages, but that it still exists in the present day. One of the most interesting verses is that of 12.96, where it is said of certain opinions held by men, that they differ from the teaching of the Veda, that such opinions spring up and soon perish and are worthless and false, because they are of modern date. We have defini-

tions also of *Smṛti*, 'what has been remembered,' or, as it is usually called, 'Tradition,' in contrast to *Śruti*, 'Revelation,' 'what has been seen.' The latter is declared to be the Veda, while the former is the Institutes of the Sacred Law. It might be assumed that the reference is to the Law-Book of Manu alone, but as Bühler points out in a note on 3.232, where the word is in the plural, it is assumed quite clearly that there are more law books in existence than one. This same passage speaks of other works also, legends, tales, Purāṇas, and apochryphal stories based on the Vedas.

The study of the book has further made it plain that there are many passages which cannot be reconciled with one another, conflicting teaching which would never have been imparted by the Creator at the beginning, had he wished to give guidance to men ; but passages which are only to be expected if we recognise that the book is a compilation, and that its compilers were content to place them side by side, because they stood side by side in other and earlier law books, or were the teaching and opinions which prevailed at the time Manu's laws were first compiled. There is one such law book distinctly referred to in 6.21, where it is said that hermits may adopt a particular mode of life; and that in doing so they will be following the rule of the Institutes of Vikhanas. Again it is said, in 8.140, that fifteen per cent. interest was allowed by Vasiṣṭha, and a law book bearing that sage's name is still extant, containing the regulation referred to by Manu. The researches of Professor Bühler also bring out the fact that in this law book of Vasiṣṭha, opinions are attributed to Manu which, only in part, are to be found in this Code of Manu which we now possess. Vasiṣṭha, for example, gives a quotation to the effect that in offering hospitality, a man may cook a full-grown ox or a full-grown he-goat for a Brāhman or Kṣatriya guest.<sup>1</sup> The similarity of many verses and passages in the Mahābhārata and Manu has also to be noted. Professor Bühler, in his edition of Manu's laws gives a synopsis of the parallel passages. Out of a total of 119 verses, the first chapter alone contains 27 verses which correspond to verses in the Mahābhārata.

It is from arguments such as these that authorities assert that the present book had a forerunner of the same name. They point also to the early belief that Manu (using the name generally without distinguishing between the various Manus) was regarded as the father of mankind, that he laid the foundation of the moral and social order, and prepared, for the benefit of his descendants, a system of laws to guide their steps in all the ways of life. There is one passage in this connection which may be quoted from the Mahābhārata. In the 12th book (c. 336) we read that 'the seven rishis had the self-born Manu associated with them as the eighth, and that these eight, after being possessed by Sarasvatī, the goddess of speech, produced a book of 100,000 verses, and that at some future time, Manu, guided by this treatise, would declare to the world its duties

<sup>1</sup> Bühler's Introduction, p. 31. This quotation, of course, does not appear in our present Manu's Code.

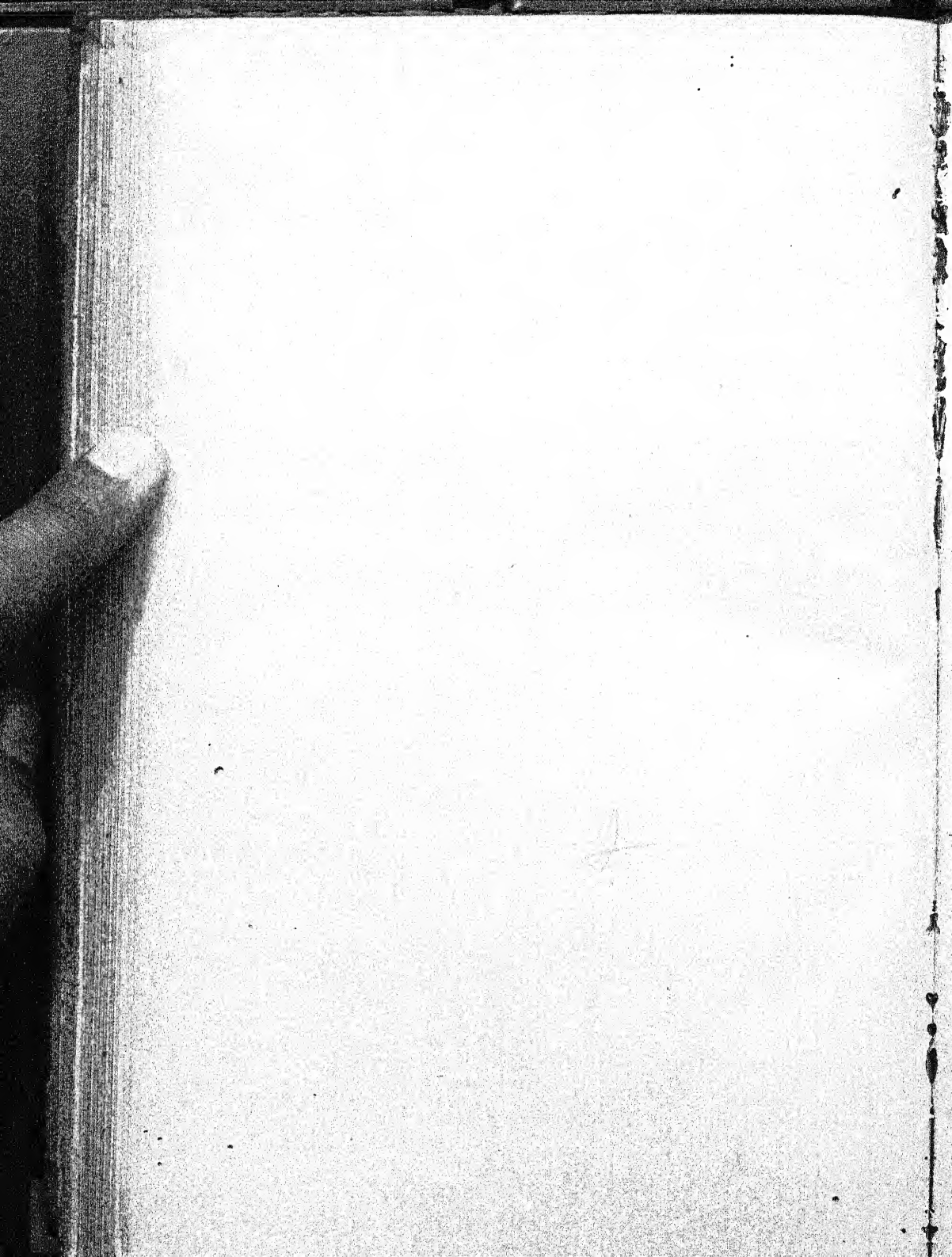


and observances. The original work was to disappear on the death of a very wise and holy king called Uparicara, but it is definitely said to have been composed in the first of the four ages. It is unnecessary, however, to enter further into details. Enough has been said to shew that the Code of Manu itself, as well as other Sanskrit works, prove that we must be content with a less lofty origin and a more recent date than is claimed for it in the first chapter, and by many of its admirers in India at the present day. As to the date when the book was written, Monier Williams, to some extent on the ground that apart from Brahmā it mentions only Vedic deities<sup>1</sup> (if we except the one reference to Viṣṇu and Hara, in the last chapter), argues that the compilation of the Code must have taken place not later than the fifth century B.C. Sir William Jones, its first English translator, put it as early and as exactly as 1280 B.C. Max Müller, on the other hand, suggests a period so late as the fifth century A.D. Bühler, however, is much less definite, and is content to say that the book certainly existed in the second century A.D. and seems to have been composed between that and the second century B.C. The same authority is also of the opinion that the compilers of the Mahābhārata and the author of our existing law book both made use of earlier materials. When the question is asked what these earlier materials were, the answer is given that they were the Dharma Sūtras, or aphoristic rules, 'current among a particular tribe, or rather school, of Brāhmins, called Mānavas,'<sup>2</sup> which, like many others that arose, devoted itself to the study of the Sacred Law. As time passed such schools found it necessary, for the purpose of instruction and for their own benefit, either to 'remodel the old existing works or compose entirely new ones.' They preferred to adopt the former alternative, and Manu's book, the Mānava Dharma Śāstra, was one of those produced. That it should still possess its pre-eminence is to be explained by the fact to which we have already referred, that it bore the sacred name of Manu, the progenitor and law-giver of the human race.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nor is there any allusion to Satī, nor to the worship of Viṣṇu and Śiva. *Indian Wisdom*, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Monier Williams. *Indian Wisdom*, p. 205.

<sup>3</sup> Bühler. See Bühler's *Introduction to Manu*, pp. 54, 55.



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